TEN SERMONS,

Tending chiefly to the fitting of men for the worthy receiving of the LORDS SVPPER.

VVherein, amongst many other holy *Instructions, the Doctrines of sound Repentance* and Humiliation, and of Gods speciall favours unto penitent sinners, and worthy Communicants, are largely and effectually handled.

The sixe first, by I. DOD.

The foure last, by R. CLEAVER.

Whereunto is annexed a plaine and learned Metaphrase on the Epistle to the COLOSSIANS, *Written by a godly and judicious Preacher.*

There is also set before the Sermons, a short Dialogue of Preparation, containing the chiefe Points that concerne *the worthy receiving of the Lords Supper: taken, for the* most part, out of the Sermons following; and collected into a Method, for the benefit and ease of those that desire direction in this matter.

Newly Printed, and inlarged.

LONDON:
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SERMONS

TO THE RIGHT

Worſhipfull, the Lady ANNE COPE, Wife to Sir ANTHONY COPE, of *Hanwell*; and to her vertuous Daughter, the Lady *Elizabeth Cope*, Wife to Sir *William Cope*, of *Hardwicke*:

Encreaſe of Grace, and all true Happineſſe, &c.

IT is a thing better knowne, than well conſidered of, that in the myſtical Body of Chriſt Ieſus, every member hath his ſeverall Office, whereon it muſt attend; the weakeſt, as well as the ſtrongeſt: and in the Family of the great Ruler of Heaven and Earth, each ſervant hath his ſeverall talent, which he muſt imploy; the meaneſt, as well as the worthieſt. To deny my ſelfe to be a Member of that Body, or a Servant of that Family, I cannot without iniury to God and my ſelfe: to profeſſe to be ſuch a one in word, and in deed to deny it, were no leſſe diſhonourable to my Head, to my Maſter, than diſcomfortable to my ſelfe. What then is to be don? I bethought my ſelfe (for the avoiding of theſe Rockes) what ſervice I might performe; and in thinking, this which I have now done, was offered to my conſideration: whereby, as an underling in Gods Houſe-hold, for want of greater abilitie, I have done my beſt endeavour to put forth to the beſt advantage others Talents, which elſe (to the griefe of many) would have beene hidden at leaſt, if not utterly loſt: For the doing whereof, I had rather undergoe the cenſures of ſuch as are curious & carnally diſpoſed, than deprive thoſe of a benefit, that are religious and ſpiritually minded.

Let it not be offensive unto your Ladiſhips, that I have preſumed to offer theſe Sermons unto publike view, ſheltred as it were under your Names; for I had ſundry Motives which even inforced me thus to doe.

Firſt, in regard of the Matter therein contained; much of it being deliuered in your hearing, and al of it ſuiting unto your affections: whoſe religious care, for the preparing both of your ſelves, and of thoſe that depend upon you, for the worthy receiving of the holy Sacrament, *is well known unto thoſe that are acquainted with your converſation in Chriſt Ieſus.*

Secondly, in regard of the Authors: whoſe affections, I perſwade my ſelfe, is ſuch towards you, in ſundry both Civil and Religious reſpects, that they would moſt willingly conſecrate themſelves and their Labours, to your further building up in Chriſt Ieſus.

Laſtly, in regard of my ſelfe, who for many ſpeciall favors receiued, do acknowledge my ſelfe unrequitably indebted, & indiſſolubly bound unto your Ladiſhips. And having nothing of mine owne of any worth, whereby to teſtifie my unfained thankfulneſſe, I have borrowed of others for this purpoſe, and withall annexed my hand-writing, that if my ingratitude ſhould hereafter appeare, I might by a publike Cenſure be condemned & made aſhamed for the ſame. Thus hoping for pardon of my boldneſſe, and for favourable acceptance of my good meaning in this behalfe, I humbly take my leave; recommending your Ladiſhips to the Lord, & to the Word of his Grace, who is able to perfect that good work which he hath begun in you both.

Your Ladiſhips moſt bounden,
and in all Chriſtian duties to be
commanded,

IOHN WINSTON.

To the Christian Reader.

LOoke not (good Reader) to finde in these Sermons an absolute discourse of this Subject, of Preparation to the Sacrament, for that was not intended by the Authors, but onely the excitement of their present Auditors, as they saw occasion: whereby yet I doubt not, but a Christian heart shall finde great furtherance in that worke of Preparation.

Furthermore, let it please the Reader to be advertised, that the Texts handled in this Book, have neither so many Doctrines gathered from them, as the Authors could have done, nor so many Vses inforced upon the Doctrines, but onely such, as were thought most meete for their present Auditorie.

In this which I have done, I had, as the approbation, so also the helpe of those that preached these Sermons following, for the reviſing and perfecting of divers things: yet so, as their leisure could afford: and therefore, what defects soever shall be found in the manner of penning, let them be imputed to me (if the Printer be not faulty) not unto them, who were content to put a finger, but not their whole hand, to this Worke.

IOHN WINSTON.

A Summarie Collection of the Heads of Doctrines, handled in the *Sermons following.*

The Doctrine of the first Sermon, on PROV. 28. 13.

1 *HIding of Sinne hindereth all true prosperity.*

2 *He that would have pardon for his offences, must bring before God an acknowledgement of the same.*

3 *He that would be assured of Gods favour, must joyne reformation with his confession.*

4 *Whosoever confesseth his faults, and endeavours to amend them, shall finde mercy from God, how sinfull soever he hath been in former times.*

The Doctrines of the second and third Sermons, on ISA. 1. 16.

1 *Whosoever would have God wash him with the blood of his Sonne, must wash himselfe by godly sorrow.*

2 *Christians must have regard to the manner of their good workes, as well as to the matter.*

3 *All penitent persons must learne to doe well.*

4 *Every one must have a principall care of the duties that pertaine unto him.*

5 *Workes of mercy are very acceptable unto the Lord.*

6 *In matters of religion, men must hearken unto God, and not unto flesh and blood.*

7 *If we become truely penitent, neither the greatnesse nor multitude of our sinnes shall hinder our salvation.*

8 *God looketh for truth, not for perfection, at the hands of his children.*

9 *Those that have soundly repented shall not onely have spirituall graces, but also corporall blessings bestowed upon them.*

The

A briefe ſumme of the Doctrines, &c.

The Doctrines of the fourth Sermon, on 2 CHRON. 30. 18.

1 *It is the dutie of all Governours, to pray for them that belong unto their charge.*

2 *Whoſoever would receive mercy from God in the Sacrament, muſt come with a ſincere heart thereunto.*

3 *So long as we labour to keepe the ſubſtance of Gods worſhip willingly, though we faile in ſome circumſtances unwillingly, God will be mercifull unto us.*

4 *God doth accept, and will fulfill every faithfull prayer that is made unto him.*

The Doctrines of the fift Sermon, on ISA. 55. 1.

1 *The thirſty ſoule alone hath intereſt in the graces of God, and ſhall reape benefit by the meanes of grace.*

2 *Whoſoever commeth to Chriſt Jeſus in the religious uſe of his Ordinances, ſhall have all his wants ſupplyed.*

3 *The beſt things are beſt cheape.*

4 *Nothing can ſatisfie and content the minde, but Grace.*

The Doctrines of the ſixth Sermon, on MATTH. 22. 12.

1 *God is the only abſolute King over all the whole world.*

2 *The Lord taketh notice of every gueſt that ſitteth at his Table*

3 *It is not ſufficient to come to Gods Wedding-Feaſt, but wee muſt come as fit Gueſts for ſo great a Banquet, and ſo glorious a Preſence.*

4 *When God hath to deale even againſt ſinners, yet he dealeth in good and peaceable termes.*

5 *Sinners ſhall have nothing to ſay for themſelves, when God entreth into judgement with them.*

6 *The ſpeciall time and place of the puniſhment of wicked men, is after this life, in Hell fire.*

The Doctrines of the ſeventh Sermon, on PSAL. 119. 1.

1 *Religion is the way to happineſſe.*

2 *So much ſincerity as any one hath, ſo much happineſſe ſhall he have.*

3 *It is a marvellous great prerogative, to be freed from the bondage of sinne.*

4 *Nothing is superfluous, that is done in obedience to Gods holy will.*

The Doctrines of the eight Sermon, on Iohn 6.

1 *By faire speeches to us, or courteous usage of us, we ought not to be stayed from telling men their faults, when by our calling we are required to admonish them.*

2 *Christ Iesus is acquainted with the purpose of such as come to his services.*

3 *A man cannot be both a Worldling, and a Christian.*

4 *They are most provident for themselves, whose greatest labour is for grace.*

5 *The efficacie of the Word and Sacrament, is from Christ his owne hand.*

The Doctrines of the ninth and tenth Sermons, on Mark. 14.18.

1 *Iesus Christ knew before what sufferings he was to undergoe.*

2 *They are like to stand best, who are most fearefull of falling.*

3 *No bands of kindenesse can make wicked men faithfull unto godly men.*

4 *Wicked men fulfill the will of God, to their owne condemnation.*

5 *All the delights and contentments of the wicked men in this world, cannot countervaile their miseries in the world to come.*

6 *The efficacie of the Sacrament is from Gods owne hand.*

7 *Christ Iesus, in the Sacrament, by corporall food giveth a most sure possession of himselfe, and union with himselfe.*

8 *Christ in the Sacrament doth make a full Meale.*

9 *Faithfull Communicants at the Lords Table, come to bee inriched by Christ his Legacie.*

A BRIEFE DIALOGVE CONCERNING PREPARATION FOR THE WORTHY RECEIVING OF THE LORDS SVPPER.

Taken, for the most part, out of the Sermons following.

WHat is the Lords Supper?

It is a Sacrament of the Eternall Covenant; whereby, through the use of Bread & Wine, rightly administred, and faithfully received, the soules of them that are ingrafted into CHRIST are spiritually nourished into eternall life. Mat. 26. Verse 28.

What then is required of those that will be partakers of this heavenly food at the Lords Table?

They must be prepared, as meete guests for such a banquet. Ioh. 6. ver. 39. 54. &c. Mat. 22. 12. 1 Cor. 11. Verse 28.

For the better attaining to this preparation, how many things are there to be considered?

Three: First, what is to be done before the partaking of it: Secondly, what at it: Thirdly, what after it.

What is that which must be done before?

There must be first, an examination how fit wee are to receive: secondly, a premeditation of the benefits that we are to receive: and thirdly, faithfull and fervent prayer for Gods blessing upon our examination, premeditation, and receiving.

Of what points are wee to examine our selves?

1 Examination. First in generall, whether we be of the number of the Faithfull, and have in us the life of Grace: for otherwise, wee are utterly unfit to be partakers of the Lords Supper; which is appointed for food, to continue spirituall life where it is; and not to worke it, where it is not: to be for nourishment unto Gods Children; but for the bane and destruction of Dogges and Swine, that dare presume to meddle with the same.

2 Secondly, we must examine our selves more particularly.

Concerning what matters?

Whether wee have attained unto a competent measure of Repentance, Knowledge, Faith, and Loue: which if we can finde in our selves, wee may resolve our hearts in that Point of generall Examination, and conclude, that wee are within the Covenant of Grace, and have communion with Christ Iesus, and therefore are in state to bee Communicants at his Table.

How should we try our selves in the matter of repentance?

1 Repentance. Wee must examine, first whether wee have at any time carefully sifted our hearts and behaviours, to finde out as many of our corruptions as possibly wee could. Secondly, whether we have beene, and are, heartily sorrowfull for the same. Thirdly, whether wee have rightly confessed them before the Lord, with an earnest desire of the pardon thereof. And fourthly, whether we purpose and resolve for ever hereafter (through Gods gracious assistance) to reforme both our hearts and waies.

Is there any necessity of that searching of our selues?

1 Searching. See the Sermon on. Pro. 28. 3. Deut. 1. Iob 20. 12. Yes verily: for otherwise, wee shall bee found hiders of sinne; which hindereth all true prosperity, and argueth plainely, that there is in us a loue of iniquitie, and abundance of hypocrisie, which will keepe us from reaping benefit by the Word, or Sacrament.

Wherby should we try our selves, to the intent we may come to a more full and particular sight of our corruption?

Psal 119 59. By the Law of God, which is the true Touch-stone; examining our selves by every Commandement, that so wee may

discerne,

discerne, if not all, yet the most part of the corruptions of our soules, and errors of our lives: And for our more orderly proceeding herein, we may use this direction following: wherein are set downe the chiefe Heads of most of the sins against every Commandement.

Sinnes against the first Commandement.

1 ATheisme; which is, when men either thinke there is no God, or live as if there were no God.

2 Idolatry, which is the having of a false God.

3 Ignorance, uncapablenesse of Knowledge, Errours and Heresies.

4 Forgetfulnesse of Good things, especially of those that most concerne us, and chiefly at that instant when we should make use of them: Secondly, remembring of evill things, especially of those that may most corrupt us; and chiefly them when we should be most free from the thought of them.

5 Vnwillingnesse unto good things, principally to the best: readinesse unto, and wilfulnesse in evill, especially the worst: secondly, impatience under crosses.

6 Distrust of Gods power, mercy, &c. promises, and providence; whence carnall feares are wrought and cherished, and the true feare of God is expelled and banished.

7 Presumption upon Gods mercy.

8 Carnall confidence in Wit, Learning, Wealth, Strength, Friends, &c. thinking our selves the better, or safer, simply for them; whence ariseth pride and security.

9 Much love of evill; as also of our selves, our friends, our pleasure profit, credit, &c. Secondly, little love of God and of goodnesse, and of Gods servants and services.

10 Hatred of God and goodnesse: secondly, want of hatred against our owne and others sinnes.

11 Abundance of worldly sorrow, shame and discontentment: secondly, want of spirituall griefe and indignation against our owne and others transgressions: thirdly, not lamenting for the calamities of Gods people, private or publike.

12 Immoderate carnall mirth; too little spirituall joy.

If any desire proofes of Scripture for these particular sins mentioned, he may use the helpe of Master *Dods* Booke on the Commandements; or, of the *true Watch*, where many of these are touched.

13 Hardneſſe of heart, benummednesse of conſcience, or helliſh terrors and accuſations, proceeding from doing things either without, or againſt the Rules of the Word.

Sinnes againſt the ſecond Commandement.

1 BAſe and unwarranted conceits of God, as when wee frame any Image of him in our mindes.

2 Worſhipping of Images.

3 Adoration of Angels or Saints, obſerving Holy-daies in devotion to them, ſwearing by them, &c.

4 Approbation of Idolatry, by preſence, ſpeech, geſture, ſilence, keeping of ſuperſtitious Relickes & Monuments, keeping company with Idolaters, &c.

5 Neglect of any of Gods Ordinances, as of Preaching, Hearing, Reading, Meditation, Conference, the uſe of good Bookes, and of good company, of private and publike Prayer, Faſting, making of Vowes, &c.

6 Superſtitious Faſting, raſh Vowes, breach of lawfull Vowes, abuſe of Lots, &c.

7 Want of ſorrow, for being borne of Idolatrous Forefathers.

Sinnes againſt the third Commandement.

1 PRofeſſion joyned with prophaneneſſe, whereby Gods name is diſhonoured.

2 Abuſing of Gods Word: firſt, by fruitleſſe ſpeaking of it: ſecondly, framing jeſts out of it, or againſt it: thirdly maintaining of ſinne by it: fourthly, applying it to charming, &c.

3 Abuſing the names or Titles of God: firſt, by admiration, as by ſaying in our common talke, O Lord, O Ieſus, &c. ſecondly, by curſing, &c.

4 Swearing vainely, outragiouſly, falſely, &c.

5 Blaſpheming.

6 Taking a lawfull Oath, without due reverence and conſideration.

7 Praying without Faith, Feeling, Reverence, Fervencie,

not waiting for an answer, &c. asking evill things: ayming more in our requests, at the relieving of our necessitie, then at the advancement of Gods glory.

8 Hearing, reading, meditating, conferring, singing of Psalmes, and receiving the Sacrament, without preparation, attention, reverence, delight, and profit.

9 Light passing over of Gods great workes of Creation, Preservation, Redemption, as also of other his mercies, and judgements.

10 Abuse of our Christian liberty, to the hardening, ensnaring, perverting or just grieving of any.

Sinnes against the fourth Commandement.

1 NEglect of preparation for the Sabbath, before it come. and of fitting our hearts for holy services, when it is come.

2 Prophane absence from, or unfruitfull presence at Gods Ordinance.

3 Excessive eating and drinking, which causeth drowsines, and unfitnesse for Gods worship.

4 Doing any ordinary worke of our Calling.

5 All recreations, which distract.

6 Vaine and worldly speeches and thoughts.

7 A secret desire that the Sabbath were over.

8 Neglect of calling our selves, or others, to a Reckoning after holy Exercises.

9 Giving liberty to our selves in the night, before the whole Sabbath be ended.

Sinnes against the fifth Commandement.

Sinnes of all Inferiors, in respect of their Superiors.

1 WAnt of reverence, inward or outward. 2. Neglect of Prayer. 3. And of humble submission.

Sinnes of all Superiors.

1 Want of love. 2 Fayling in prayer. 3 And in giving good example.

Sinnes of Children, in respect of their Parents.

1 Disobedience.

2 Murmuring at their Parents corrections, though unjust.

3 Contemning of them, for any defect of body or minde.

4 Vnthankfulnesse in not relieving them, not standing for their deserved credit, &c.

Sinnes of Parents.

1 Negligence, in not instructing their Children betime.

2 Not correcting them till it be too late; or doing it with bitternesse, without compassion, instruction, and prayer.

3 Giving them ill example.

4 Neglect of bringing them up in some lawfull Calling.

5 Not bestowing them timely and religiously in Marriage.

6 Light behaviour before them, and too much familiaritie with them, whereby they become vile in their eyes.

7 Loving Beauty, or any outward parts more than Gods Image in them.

8 A sinne peculiar to the mother, is, refusing to nurse them.

Servants sinnes, in respect of their Governours.

The three first sinnes in Children, may be in Servants, as also these that follow:

1 Idlenesse in their Calling.

2 Vnthriftinesse and unfaithfulnesse in dealing with their Masters goods and affaires.

3 Stealing, privie defrauding of them, &c.

4 Eye-service.

Divers sinnes of Parents are found in Masters, as also these that follow.

1 Vnadvised entertainment of sinfull servants.

2 Not using religious exercises with them: not admonishing nor correcting them, or doing it in an evill manner: grieving more when they faile in their businesse, than when they are slacke in Gods service.

3 Not recompensing their labours, by giving them a due reward when they are with them, and when they part from them.

4 Neglect of them in sicknesse: unjust stopping of their wages for that time.

5 Not

5 Not relieving them (if they be able) in their age, who have ſpent their youth in their ſervice,

Sinnes of the Wife, in reſpect of her Husband.

1 Fayling in reverence: which appeareth in froward looks, ſpeeches, or behaviour.

2 Diſobedience in the ſinalleſt matters.

Sinnes of the Husband.

1 Not dwelling with his Wife.

2 Neglect of edifying her, by inſtruction and example.

3 Denying her comfortable maintenance, & imployment.

Sinnes common to them both.

1 Want of love.

2 Bewraying one anothers infirmities: diſcovering each others infirmities.

3 Iealouſie. 4 Contention.

Sinnes of the People, in regard of their Miniſters.

1 Diſobeying and oppoſing againſt their Doctrine.

2 Denying them competent maintenance.

3 Not ſtanding for them, when they are wronged.

Sinnes of Miniſters.

1 Slackneſſe in Preaching. 2 Vnprofitable or hurtfull Teaching. 3 Giving ill example.

Sinnes of Subjects.

1 Rebellion. 2 Refuſing to pay dues.

Sinnes of Magiſtrates.

1 Careleſneſſe in eſtabliſhing & promoting true Religion.

2 Of maintaining peace, and providing that malefactours may be puniſhed, and well-doers be encouraged.

Sinnes of inferiours, in gifts or age.

1 Not acknowledging, nor reverencing, nor imitating the Graces of their Superiours.

2 Deſpiſing of the Aged.

Sinnes againſt the ſixth Commandement.

1 RAſh Anger, Envy, Hatred, Malice.

2 Brawling, Reviling, Threatning, and provoking of others.

3 Fighting.
4 Crueltie in puniſhing, oppreſſing, &c.
5 Murthering of our ſelves, or others, or conſent thereto.
6 Immoderate worldly ſorrow: neglect of Phyſicke, of wholeſome diet, and exerciſe, ſurfetting, and drunkenneſſe; all which are enemies to the health and life of man.
7 Crueltie to our owne or others ſoules.

Sinnes againſt the ſeventh Commandement.

1 ADulterie, Fornication, Inceſt, Rape, Sodomie.
2 All wantonneſſe, ſecret or open, alone, or with others.
4 Vnholy marriages, in regard of Religion, age, neereneſſe of bloud, want of Parents conſent, &c.
5 Abuſe of the Marriage-Bed, not obſerving the time of { natural ſeperatiõ, *Leu.* 18.19 ſolemne humiliation.
6 Nouriſhing of the cauſes and occaſions of wantonneſſe, as impure Luſts, Surfetting, Drunkenneſſe, Idleneſſe, laſcivious Apparell, ſocietie with laſcivious perſons, lewd Books, Songs, or Speeches, wanton Looks, Pictures, Stage-Playes, Dauncing, Dalliance, &c.
7 Wearing apparell contrary to our Sexe.
8 Vnlawfull Divorce.

Sinnes againſt the eighth Commandement.

1 COvetouſneſſe, and all deſire of our Neighbours goods, albeit through feare or ſhame we cannot get them.
2 Church-robbing.
3 Robbing of our ſelves, by waſtefulnes in Dyet, Apparell, Gaming, &c. by Idleneſſe, unadviſed Suretiſhip, Niggardlineſſe, &c.
4 Robbing of others, taking away the ſmalleſt things: firſt, by fraud: ſecondly, uncharitable incloſure: thirdly, dealing wrongfully with the goods of the deceaſed: fourthly, deceit in buying and ſelling: fifthly, with-holding either things com-

committed unto us, or things found, lent, earned, or otherwise due.

5 Not making of restitution.

6 Counselling, or consenting to others in Theft.

Sinnes against the ninth Commandement.

1 FAlse witnesse-bearing in publike or private, or consent thereunto.

2 Raysing, spreading abroad, or listening to false reports of Tale-bearers.

3 Rash suspition, hard judging, interpreting things in the worst sense.

4 Aggravating and discovering others infirmities, without care of their credit, others edification, or our owne good.

5 Flatterie.

6 Lying though in jest, or to a good end.

7 Boasting.

8 Injurious charging of our selves to be Hypocrites in time of temptation.

9 Want of care of our owne and others good name, that God might have more glory.

The breach of the tenth Commandent: by

MVltitudes of evill thoughts and motions against our neighbours, and scarcitie of such as are good.

When we have attained to a particular sight of our many and grievous iniquities and transgressions; what is further to be done of us?

Wee must labour to bring our hearts to true sorrow and contrition.

What use is there of that?

It is very requisite in divers respects; it being a speciall meanes to purge our soules from the pollution of sinne, to move the Lord to have compassion on us, and plentifully to powre downe his mercies upon us, without which, it is certaine there is no sound repentance in us, nor mercie to be expected from our God.

2 Godly sorrow See the Sermon on Isa. 1. Doct. 1. Iam. 4. 8. 9. Ier. 4. 14. Ioel 2. 13. Zac. 12. 10. & 2. Chro. 13. 1.

Sub

Sith it is ſo neceſſary, ſhew me how it may be got.

1 We muſt beſeech the Lord (from whom proceedeth every good and perfect gift) to worke it in our hearts.

2 We muſt uſe all good helpes to ſtirre up our ſelves thereunto: as,

Neh 9. Pſalme 51. 1 To call to minde the multitude, and grievouſneſſe, and offenſiveneſſe of our ſinnes, together with our long continuance therein; aggravating them by every circumſtance, to make them more odious to our ſoules.

Eccleſ. 7. 2 To goe to the houſe of mourning, and to make uſe of every ſtroke of God, as well upon others as our ſelues.

3 Not onely with patience to indure, but with earneſtneſſe to intreat, and with gladneſſe to accept of the helpe of ſuch as have broken hearts themſelves, and ſo are more able and skilfull to pierce and wound the ſoules of others.

4 When by our owne ſifting, and others faithfull dealing, our hearts are touched with ſome remorſe, let us ſeriouſly and throughly ponder upon the infinite mercy of God the Father, in giving his Sonne; and of Ieſus Chriſt, in giving himſelfe for us; who by reaſon of our ſinnes, were deadly enemies unto him: the conſideration whereof, cannot but move our hearts to relent, unleſſe they be altogether flintie, and hard as an Adamant.

When our hearts are touched with inward griefe for our ſpeciall corruptions, what is to be done in the next place?

3 We muſt bring them in an holy confeſſion before GOD.

Confeſſion. Prov. 28. See the thirteenth Sermon. *Doct.* 2. 1 Ioh. 1. 9. 2 Sam. 24. 12. Dan. 9. 19. Neh. 1. 5. 6.

What motives are there, to induce us ſo to doe?

Divers: for,

1 Without this, there is no promiſe of pardon of ſinne, nor indeed any godly ſorrow, or ſound repentance for ſinne.

2 This is a ſoveraigne preſervative againſt Relapſes, as may be ſeene in *David*, *Peter*, and *Paul*.

3 This is an effectuall meanes to quicken our hearts unto prayer.

4 Hereby God is much glorified, in his Truth, Mercy, and Iuſtice. *Ioſh. 7. verſe 19.*

Seeing this acknowledgement of ſinne is ſo needfull, declare how it muſt be performed?

These

These Rules must be observed therein.

First, that it proceed from a good Root, *viz.*

1 From an utter hatred of sinne, not from wearinesse under the Crosse, as in *Pharaoh*; nor from some sudden passion, as in *Saul*.

2 From hope of mercy: for if that be wanting, we shall never rest on God for pardon. 2 Sam 14. 14.

Secondly, that it be made in a good manner, *viz.*

1 Heartily and sincerely, not coldly and hypocritically.

2 Particularly, and with enumeration of our speciall and most beloved sinnes, as in *Paul* and *Ezra*. Ier. 31. 19.

What will follow upon such a Confession?

A desire of generall reformation, and a full purpose to abandon the allowance of every infirmity, and the practise of every grosse sinne. 4 Reformation. See the Sermon on Prov. 28. Doct. 3.

How may this reformation be attained unto?

1 We must constantly and carefully auoid all the occasions of sinne, and be most jealous of our selves, where we are most prone to be overtaken. Act. 19. 18. Isa. 1. 16.

2 We must conscionably and continually use all the meanes of goodnesse.

3 When we are overtaken through infirmity, we must presently and heartily lament our fall, and seeke a reconciliation.

4 If these meanes prevaile not, we must binde our selves by a solemne Vow, to strive against our principall sins, and most dangerous corruptions.

What other notes are there, besides these already spoken of, whereby we may be assured, that our repentance is sound, and that our hearts doe not deceive us therein?

These following.

1 If wee be universall in our obedience, desiring to practise or forbeare whatsoever God would have us: not giving a dispensation to our selves for the committing of any sinne, or for the omitting of any duty; but disliking all manner of evill, both in our selves and others. Notes of sound repentance. Psal. 119. 6. See the Sermon on that place. Doct. 2. Psal. 3. 13. 14.

2 If wee increase in goodnesse, neither waxing worse, not standing at a stay, but daily getting ground of our corruptions.

Iob 31. 1. &c. 2 Cor. 4. 3.

3 If in all our intents and actions we looke unto the Lord, as the searcher of our hearts, and the trier and rewarder of our workes: not discouraging our selves, whatsoever men thinke or speake of us and our doings, so that God do approve of us, and them; nor contenting our selves with mens approbation, when the testimony of God is not for us.

4 If we like best, and desire most that company in private, and that teaching in publike, where our speciall corruptions shall be roundly, and wisely, and mercifully reproved and inveighed against; and the duties wherein wee come shortest, most earnestly pressed, and stood upon: Neither falling out with those that admonish us, nor denying, cloking, excusing, or extenuating our faults.

What else is required in a worthy Receiver?

2 Knowledge.

A competent measure of knowledge, so that he be able to discerne betweene the Elements, and the Lords Bodie and Bloud, taking every thing in its owne nature and kinde: not confounding the signe with the thing signified, nor putting no difference betweene the Sacramentall and common Bread; but using each of them in the manner appointed by Christ, and with such reverence as is due unto them, and to that end for which they were ordained; namely, the commemoration of Christ his death, & our neerer & fuller communion with him.

What further examination must we use, before our communicating at the Lords Table?

3 Faith. Heb. 12. 6. Rom. 14. 23.

We must trie whether we have Faith, or not: without the which, it is impossible to please God; and whatsoever we do, is sinne.

What then is to be beleeved concerning this particular Ordinance?

See the second Sermon on *Marke* 14. Doct. 7.

That it is ordained of God, not onely to be a signe, to signifie and represent, but a Seale also to confirme, and an instrument to exhibite Christ, with all his merits, unto every Beleever.

Why is love unto men, required in all faithfull Receivers?

4 Love, 1. Iohn 3.

1 Because being destitute of that, we cannot be assured of Gods love unto us, nor of our love unto him.

2 We cannot, with any confidence, expect at the Sacra-

ment

crament a generall acquaintance from all our debts unto God, except we in love can passe by small offences in our brethren. Mat. 18.35.

3 The Lords Supper is ordained as a Seale of the mutuall fellowship and communion of Gods people, as with their Head Christ, so with one another. 3

What rules are we to observe in love?

1 If any indignity or injury have beene offered us, wee must forgive and forget the same, and overcome evill with goodnesse; loving them that hate us, and praying for them that speake and practise evill against us; at least, desiring and striving so to doe. See the Sermon on 1 Ia. 1. Doct. 2. Mat. 18. 35. Rom. 12. Mat. 5.

2 If we have done wrong unto others, wee must undoe it againe: otherwise our sacrifice and service cannot be accepted.

But what if those whom we have wronged, be farre off, that we cannot seeke unto them: or will not yeeld to a reconciliation, when it is sought for?

God will accept of our true and unfained desire in that behalfe, when a reconciliation is desired: but occasion denied, and if others will not be pacified towards us, it is their fault, and not ours, neither must that keepe us from the Sacrament.

Thus much concerning Examination.

What is that Premeditation which must be used?

It is a serious consideration of the benefits which we are to receiue by Christ. Premeditation. 2

What are those?

They are set downe in the new Covenant (whereof the Lords supper is a seale) & they may be reduced to these heads. Ezek 36.25. Ier. 31:33.

1 First, freedome from all manner of evill whatsoever, whether of sinne, or misery in this life, or in that which is to come, See the Sermon on Pro. 18 Doct. 4. And that on Psal. 119. Doct. 1.

2 Secondly, the enjoyment of all good things.

1 In this world: and that
- 1 For the inward man,
  - 1 Perfect justification.
  - 2 True sanctification.
- 2 For the outward man. A good name, estate, safety, health, &c.

2 In the world to come, all manner of happinesse.

Having

Having thus examined our ſelves, concerning our Repentance, Knowledge, Faith, and Love, and uſed premeditation of the benefits that are to be expected of all worthy Receivers, what remaineth further to be done by us?

3. Prayer. We muſt, before our approaching to the Lords Table, earneſtly beſeech his Majeſtie to give a bleſſing to thoſe our endevours: and where we have come ſhort in fitting our ſelves, we are to entreat him to pardon it; to accept of us in the mediation of his deare Sonne; and to make a ſupply of all our wants, of his rich mercie and free grace.

But what if a man finde that he cometh very ſhort of that examination and preparation that is required, were he not better to abſent himſelfe from the Sacrament, till he be better fitted?

See the Sermon on 2. Chron. 30. Doct. 3. In no wiſe: for if he be upright-hearted, though never ſo weake, the Lord will accept of him. And if he feele his ſickneſſe to be grievous and dangerous, he hath the more need to haſten to the Phyſitian: neither is ſtaying from Gods Ordinance, a meanes to better his eſtate, but rather to make him worſe, and to pull Gods heavy judgements upon his ſoule and body. *Numb. 9.*

Thus much concerning the duties tending to Preparation, before our receiving.

How muſt we be diſpoſed in the preſent act of receiving?

2. How we are to bee diſpoſed in the acts of receiving. Wee muſt preſent our ſelves with reverence before the Lord, ſetting our ſenſes and our faith a-worke, and heedfully meditating on theſe foure things:

Iſay 53. 1 Firſt, when we ſee the Bread broken, and the Wine powred out, we muſt conſider of the bitter Paſſion of Chriſt Ieſus; who was wounded for our tranſgreſſions, and broken for our iniquities; who encountred with his Fathers wrath, and with Satan, Death, and Hell; and for our ſakes, in particular, ſuſtained ſuch wofull terrours in his Soule, and torments in his Bodie, that he cryed out in the bitterneſſe of his heart, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* and at length ſhed forth his moſt precious bloud, for the pacifying of his Fathers diſpleaſure, and the ſatisfying of his infinite juſtice. And withall, we ſhould ſeriouſly ponder upon the inconceiveable love of God the Father, in giving his onely and well-beloved Sonne, to

ſuffer

ſuffer ſuch unſpeakeable tortures for us, who were curſed rebels againſt him: and thence be drawne to thinke on the haynouſneſſe and odiouſneſſe of our ſinnes, which ſo farre incenſed the Lords wrath and indignation, that nothing could quench the flame thereof, but onely the precious bloud of his deare Sonne.

Secondly, when we ſee the Miniſter diſtributing the Bread and Wine, wee are to conſider, that as thoſe outward Elements are offered unto us by Man; ſo Chriſt Ieſus, with all his benefits, is offered unto us by the bleſſed Trinitie. 2

Thirdly, when we reach forth our naturall hand to receive the Bread and Wine, we muſt withall reach forth the hand of Faith, to apprehend and lay hold of Chriſt. 3

Fourthly, in eating the Bread, and drinking the Wine, we muſt apply Chriſt, with all his merits, particularly nnto ourſelves; and be aſſured, that as that Bread & Wine are made the nouriſhment of our bodies, ſo Chriſt his body and bloud are made the nouriſhment of our ſoules; and as certainly as the Bread & Wine are made one ſubſtance with us, to ſtrengthen our bodies, and to refreſh our hearts, ſo ſurely Chriſt is made one with us, and we with him: and then our ſoules ſhall bee ſtrengthened, & our hearts ſpiritually revived; either preſently in the very act of receiving; or afterwards, in due time, when we ſhall ſtand in moſt need of comfort. And therefore, in aſſurance of Faith, we ſhould ſtirre up our hearts, to expect all the fore-named benefits, of remiſſion of ſinnes, and ſanctification of our natures; together with the fruition of all neceſſarie outward bleſſings, and the removall of all hurtfull croſſes. 4

Well were it for us indeed, if we could looke for theſe things to be beſtowed upon us: but the greatneſſe and multitude of our ſins is ſuch, that we juſtly feare they will keepe good things from us.

This doubt ſhould not perplexe nor trouble us, if wee bee truly penitent for all our tranſgreſſions: for Chriſt hath payed for many and great ſinnes, as well as for fewer and leſſer; and through him, the Lord is ready to pardon all, and all manner of iniquities, as well the greateſt of them, as the ſmalleſt: and if once our ſinnes be done away, all the fore-named benefits do of right belong unto us.

See the Sermon on Iſa. 1. Deut. 7. 1. Iohn 1. 9. Ezek. 18. 21.

Thus

Thus much concerning the Meditations that are needfull, in the very act of receiving.

What is to be done after our receiving?

1 What is to bee done after our receiving.

First, we must give hearty thankes unto the Lord for this inestimable benefit which we have received, in being partakers of the Lords Supper.

2 Secondly, we must carefully marke how we speed, & what successe we finde: and if the Lord affoord us present comfort, we must be much more thankefull, and indeavour by all good meanes to nourish and cherish the same: and if we misse of it for that time, we must notwithstanding give God the glory of his truth, in making good his Covenant, and every part thereof; and therfore with confidence and constancy wait and pray for the blessing: resolving with our selves, (every one in his owne soule) that as sure as God is true and faithfull in his promises, we shall in the fittest season, reape fruit and profit by his Ordinance, which in conscience and obedience unto him, we have beene partakers of. In which regard, every particular beleever may boldly speake, in this, or the like manner, unto his owne soule: I have with as great uprightnesse as I could, communicated at the Lords Table, & there received the seale of the everlasting Covenant of grace, and therefore shall it assuredly be performed unto me; and albeit my faith and assurance of Gods favour be but weake, it shall be strengthened; and whatsoever Satan, or mine owne deluded Conscience tell me, all mine iniquities are pardoned and covered, and I am at this very instant as free from sin, in *Gods* account, as *Adam* was before his Fall, and as the Saints and Angels are now in Heaven; yea, as Christ Iesus himselfe is, I being a member of his mysticall Body.

Psal. 32.

And so for sanctification: though I be tainted with much ignorance, with many errors, with bad affections and evill actions; yet the Lord according to his covenant, will reforme all, and give me a minde to know him, and his will; and a memory to hold fast what I know: he will give mee a heart to love him, to feare him, and to obey his commandements. I shall have Christ his Power, to strengthen and uphold mee; his Wisedome,

wisedome to instruct and direct me, and his Spirit to work all needfull graces in me, so that all the powers of hell shall never be able to prevaile against me, much lesse shall the afflictions of this world be able to separate me from Christ Iesus. I need not feare any evill: For all shall worke together for the best to me, neither can I want any thing that is good, for *God having* Rom. 8.
given us his Sonne, how shall he not with him give us all things?

Thirdly, we must determine & endevour to lead a new life, bringing forth the fruits of Repentance, Faith and Love, more abundantly than in former times; as having renewed our Covenant with the Lord for that purpose: and therfore when we finde any sinfull motions stirring within us, we should reason thus; Did I not at the Sacrament vow & covenant with God to strive against all manner of corruptions? and did I not receive the seale of the covenant in assurance that I should have power & strength against them? why then should I yeeld unto them? why should I be any longer in bondage unto them? nay, I will not serve sinne in the lusts thereof, but will resist it, and by the power of Christ I shall get victory over it: for the Lord hath said, that *sinne shall not have dominion over us.* Iohn 15.

So also when we finde want and imperfections in our best seruices, as coldnes in prayer, distractions in meditating, unfruitfulnesse in hearing, deadnesse in singing of Psalmes, &c. as also impatience or faintheartednes under crosses, disgraces, Persecutions, &c. Let us then relieve our selves with these or the like meditations; was I not lately at the Lords table, where I received a pledge of my ingrafting into Christ, who is the true Vine? and is there not in him sufficient juyce of all good graces to be derived to every branch that is in him? and is not the second *Adam* as able to convey his vertues into me, as the first *Adam* was to convey his corruptions? why then should I not seeke to him in assurance of obeying strength to doe and suffer whatsoever he will have me? yes, I will run unto him, & crave power and ability from him, and asking I shall obtaine, he hath said it that will never falsifie the least part of his truth. *May it not then bee concluded, if immediately unto the receiving of this Sacrament we grow worse then we were before, that we came unworthily thereunto.*

obtaining Rom. 6. 14.

Yes verily: if we be indeed worse, and not in our owne conceit onely, it is sure that there was some sinne or other unrepented of, lying upon our consciences, which caused Gods ordinance to be ineffectuall. Indeed, the worthiest receivers in their owne imaginations, and through Satans false suggestions, seeme unto themselves to be worse, (when in truth they are not so) because they feele their corruptions stirring more violently, and temptations rushing upon them more fiercely than ever before: but this is so farre from being an argument of unworthy receiving, that if they set themselves to resist in this combat, there can be no more evident testimony of their worthy receiving: for now that their sinne hath had a deadly blow, it beginneth (like a mad Bull in the same case) to rage more furiously: and Satan being dispossessed of his holds, plyeth his businesse with new and fearefull assaults, and therefore such have no cause at all to be dismayed, but rather very good cause to be comforted.

But (will some say) what shall I thinke of my selfe in this matter, when I finde that whereas I resolved upon new obedience I come still farre short of that which I am desirous to performe?

You need not discourage your heart for all this: the sight of your imperfections argueth that your eyes are more enlightened than in former times, that you have gotten an humble and lowly conceit of your selfe, and your good deeds, which are things very pleasing unto God: neither doth hee require such strict observation of the Commandements, as that wee should obey them in perfection, but only that we should consent in our hearts, and labour in our practice to yeeld obedience thereunto: which if we can doe, the Lord will graciously accept of us, and of those duties which wee performe, seeing that we faile not in the substance of his service; but onely in some circumstances, and that full sore against our wils.

See the Sermon on Isa. 28. *Doct.* 1.

See the Sermon on 2 Chr. 30. *Doct.* 3.

THE

THE FIRST SERMON OF THE LORDS SVPPER.

PROVERBS 28. VER. 13.

He that hideth his ſinnes ſhall not proſper: but he that confeſſeth and forſaketh them, ſhall have mercy.

THE drift and purpoſe of theſe words, is to ſtirre up all men to true Repentance: wherunto that they might bee the ſooner induced, and therein better directed, hee ſets downe:

First, the miſerable condition of impenitent perſons, whoſe ptoſperity is to cloake their ſinnes: concerning whom he pronounceth, that they *that hide their ſinne ſhall not proſper:* ſo long as ſinne is covered, it proſpers in the ſoule: and ſo long as ſinne thrives in the Soule, there can bee no true proſperity in the ſtate, either for inward or outward things.

Secondly, the happineſſe of penitent perſons: *they ſhall finde mercy:* whatſoever their iniquities have beene, they ſhall bee received into Gods favour, and finde all the fruits thereof, ſo that they teſtifie the ſoundneſſe of their Repentance by the performance of theſe duties following, to wit,

First, that they come to a plain and ſincere confeſſion, which is oppoſite to the former hiding, [*but hee that confeſſeth, &c.*

Secondly, that they grow to a generall reformation, implyed in theſe words [*and forſaketh them.*]

Ver. 14. *He that hideth his ſinne ſhall not proſper, &c.*

From theſe words this Doctrine evidently riſeth: that

the harbouring and hiding of sinne hindreth all true prosperity and mercy.

Doct. 1. Hiding of sin, hinders mercy.

Whersoever sin hath allowance and entertainment in the heart, sound happinesse is as far from that Party, as he himselfe is from uprightnes and goodnes: God never casteth away his kindnes upon them that indeavour not to cast all sinne out of their soules. This point is made cleare unto us in the *Psalme*, where the Prophet describing a righteous man, and shewing that he, and he alone is a blessed man, sets him out by this, that *in his spirit there is no guile:* Thereby implying, that guilefulnes and blessednesse never go together. He that with a false heart favours himselfe in any sinne, hath obtained pardon for no sin? neither is he purged from any sin, what shewes soever he may make to deceive himselfe and others. And therfore all his iniquities shall be charged upon him, the least of which is sufficient to make him accursed: and then how far such a one is from happines and true prosperity, any one may judge that hath the spirit of discerning: and this point *David* in that *Psalme* maketh plaine, by giving an instance in his owne person. He was no hypocrite indeed, yet had hypocrisie at that time a great place in his heart, and thereupon he began to hide his sin; and to invent shifts and devices to cover the same: but what followeth hereupon? *when I held my tongue* (saith he) (to wit, from confessing my sin, as afterwards by his contrary practise it is apparant) *my bones consumed, &c.* There he shews in many words what perplexity he was in when he was negligent in searching out his corruptions, and his heart had made a kinde of confederacy with sin: that howsoever he was not utterly excluded from right to Gods favour and true felicity, yet for that time he could have no sound feeling nor comfort of it, till he betook him to true and hearty confession? but then all was helped and remitted, as in that *Psalme* it followeth: *Then I acknowled my sin unto thee, neither hid I mine iniquity: for I thought I will confesse against my selfe my wickednesse unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the punishment of my sinne.*

Psal. 2.

Vse 2.

Verse 3.

Verse 4.

To this same purpose there is a heavy threatning denounced against this divellish cunning and craft in covering of sin, by the Prophet *Isaiah*, *Woe unto them that seeke deepe to hide*

Isa. 29. 15.

their

their counsell from the Lord, &c. They that have such skill and art to hide their wickednes in the darke, and to carry bad matters covertly and closely, what do they get by it? they thinke thereby to have the credit and reputation of wise men, & deep Polititians: but the curse of God belongs unto them, which there is denounced against them, and shall pursue them, & his hand shall finde them out, with all their wretched and sinfull plots and devices, which they have hatched in the secrets of their braines, and thought to keepe close from God and Man: and hee shall bring to nothing both them and their counsels: for all their deepe reaches God can over-reach them, and his judgements shall overtake and overthrow them.

Agreeable to this is the place of *Iob*, where it is said, *That when wickednesse is sweet to a man, and hee hides it under his tongue, and favours it, &c.* Then *his meat shall be turned into gall of Aspes, &c.* There that holy man of God sheweth, that when any one is a favourer and hider of sin, every thing that should bee for his good, shall turne to his hurt; his ordinarie food, his wealth, and substance: and in a word, whatsoever otherwise might be comfortable unto him, all shall go crosse with him, nothing shall bee prospered and blessed unto him. These places doe, in part, manifest unto us the danger of this cloking of sinne: what misery it brings; what happinesse it deprives us of: yet besides those, there are reasons that may more clearly evict and prove that it must needs be so: for, Iob 20.1.

1 First, the causes of this hiding of sinne are naught: which are these following. *Reasons.*

The causes of hiding of sin.

1 The first is the love of iniquitie: for sin is of that nature, that it will never tarry but where it is loved and much made of: it is such a guest as rough entertainment would drive away in a short time. 1 Love of it.

And that such do love it, is very evident in that former place of *Iob*: where it is said, that first, *wickednesse is sweet, and then they hide it.* Looke what appetite and eager desire any one can possibly have after pleasant meats and dainty dishes: the same or greater have they after sinne, the love whereof must needs be odious, because it is Gods utter enemy, and therefore the hiding of it must needs be dangerous. Iob 20.12.

2 Hypocrisie.

2 A second cause of this, is Hypocrisie; that men would faine seeme better than they are: and therefore they hide that naughtines which is in them indeed, and make a shew of that innocencie which they are farre from. This was the cause that made *David* to dissemble and cloke his great offence in the matter of *Vriah*; as the Holy Ghost testifieth in the Booke of the *Kings*: where it is said, that *Abiiams heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as the heart of David his Father, who did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and turned from nothing that he commanded him all the dayes of his life* (to wit, of set purpose, and against his conscience, with any allowance and approbation) *save onely in the matter of Vriah the Hittite.* As if he should have said: Therein indeed he was false-hearted; and that was the reason why he was so long ere he acknowledged his grievous sin, and why he fell to devising of naughtie shifts for the covering of his wickednesse, which brought him little prosperitie: nay, so farre was he from gaining any thing by it, that even one yeares cloking of sinne, procured him many sore and grievous troubles, inward and outward, for many yeares together. Thus we see the causes are bad, to wit, love of sinne, and damnable hypocrisie.

1 King. 15. 3. 5.

2 The ill effects.

Neither are the effects any better: for, whosoever doth thus cover his sinnes,

1 It hindereth prayer. Psal. 66. 18. Isai. 59. 2.

1 First, he cannot pray: for (saith *David*) *If I regard wickednesse in my heart, God will not heare mee.* Sinnes acknowledged and bewayled, quicken us to prayer: but sinnes allowed and maintained, utterly disable us for prayer; for they make a *separation betwixt God and us.*

2 It keepeth us from benefiting by the Sacrament. Ioh. 13. 27.

2 Secondly, such a one can have no benefit by the Sacrament; as we see by *Iudas*: who, being a cunning Hypocrite, and a hider of mischievous Plots against his Master, whereas he was divelish enough before, he was wholly possest by Satan after the eating of the Passeover, and the receiving of the Lords Supper: For so the Evangelist testifieth, That *after the sop* (as also after the other Sacrament, ministred at that same Meale) *Satan entred into him*; meaning, more fully than ever before. The like may be said of *Simon Magus*, *Acts* 8. *verse* 29. &c.

3 Thirdly,

3 Thirdly, the Word is altogether unprofitable unto ſuch: it is choaked in the heart, that is, corrupted with ſinne: it is even like pure Seed caſt into a filthy Sinke. Thus we ſee, both by the cauſes and effects, how hurtfull a thing this hiding of ſinne is; and how it ſtands in the way of all true proſperitie, to keepe the ſame from comming unto us. 3 Or, by the Word. Luk 8.

But againſt this it may be objected, That it ſeemes to be untrue, that thoſe that entertaine and nouriſh ſin in their ſoules, ſhall not proſper; for none proſper more than ſuch: they commit hainous and ſcandalous evils, and boaſt of them, and yet have the World at will, and more than their hearts can wiſh. And on the contrary, *David* ſaith, *When I declare my paine, and am ſorry for my ſinne, then mine enemies are alive, and are mighty, &c.* *Objection.* Pſal. 73. Pſal. 38. 18.

But for the ſatisfying of this doubt, we muſt know, that howſoever theſe ungodly ones hold up their heads, and proſper, and bring many of their purpoſes to paſſe, yet none are more wretched and miſerable than they. There is no more certaine ſigne of Gods heavy diſpleaſure, than for one to thrive in his ungodly courſes. That Child whom the Father loves, he will correct betime; and ſo dealt God with *David*: There were many greater offenders than he in Iſrael, and yet none was ſo much ſcourged, becauſe none was ſo well beloved. But for one to eſcape the Rod, and to be ſtill further given up to his owne hearts luſt, to commit ſinne with greedineſſe, this is the moſt heavy ſtroke and fearefull judgement that can poſſibly fall upon any man: For by this meanes he ſtill heapeth up wrath againſt the day of wrath, and the declaration of the juſt vengeance of God upon all unrighteous and unholy perſons, when the Lord ſhall pay him home at full for all his evill thoughts, words and workes. *Anſwer.* Proſpering in evill courſes, are a ſore plague of God. Rom. 2.

Since then it is plaine, that hiding of our tranſgreſſions ſtops up the paſſage againſt all true proſperity, this makes for the reproofe of 4. ſorts of men that offend in this point: namely, *Vſe* 1. 4 Sorts reproved.

1 Firſt, of thoſe that are altogether blinded with ignorance, and know not ſinne, nor the differences of ſinne; which are greater, which leſſer. For, till the Lord informe men by his Word and Spirit, they can never ſee theſe things; never diſ- 1 Ignorant perſons.

cerne betwixt good and evil, nor betwixt evil and evil which is more or lesse offensive. For it is light that discovers darknesse, and therefore they being destitute of the true understanding of the Word, and so consequently of the Spirit, must needs faile in the discerning, and so also in the discovering and laying open of their corruptions: and therefore faile of sound happinesse.

2 Deniers of sin. Acts 5: 1. King. 5.

2 Secondly, this is for the reproofe of another sort that are worse than the former, who having the knowledge of sinne, do yet deny their faults when they are told of them, as *Ananias* and *Saphira* did, and as *Gehezi* did when his Master examined him. Those sinnes that are smothered and carried so closely, God will manifest and discover as openly as he did theirs: laying upon the one, the punishment of a sudden and strange death: and on the other, the Leprosie of his flesh, as a meanes to cleanse his Soule.

3 Disguisers of sinne.

3 Here also are another kinde of hiders to be condemned, that will not grosly deny the fact, but will cloke it, and disguise it, and give good names to foule faults.

Such are they that would have their gaming, and unthriftinesse, and consenage, to go under the name of recreation; and all their lewd meetings and abuse of the creatures of God, and of the glorious and fearefull name of God, under the title of good-fellowship, and merry meetings, &c. And so for other notorious and grievous sins, which they paint over with faire colours: but do such prosper? When they get a little money, do they not lose more in their soules than that comes to? and do they not bring upon themselves hardnesse, and prophanenesse of heart: blindnesse and stupiditie of minde: unreadinesse and unfitnesse for any good thing: unwillingnesse to reade, heare, meditate, and conferre of holy things? are they not afraid to come into Gods holy presence in prayer, to be in the company of such as will admonish or rebuke them; to be alone in the night, at such times as the Lord doth waken their drowsie consciences? to say nothing of many foule brawles, and other hainous evils, which do usually accompanie such exercises.

Inconveniences that ensue on gaming.

So others, when they are passionate and distempered; tell them

them of it, and their anſwer is ready; What would you not have a man angry with ſin? O this is baſe hypocriſie, and ſinfull diſguiſing of your fault: for tell me, you that can be ſo eager againſt ſmal offences in others, when they concerne your ſelfe, do you not beare with greater faults both in others and in your ſelfe, when they do more neerely touch the glory of God? your owne heart tels you that it is ſo; and therefore never ſuffer your violent diſtempers and outrages to go under the vizard of zeale againſt ſinne, but let them go for hatefull paſſions as they are. *Note.*

Others we ſhall finde that will tearme their covetouſneſſe frugality, their pride in apparell comelineſſe and decency, and the like: all which perſons little conſider what great injurie they do to their owne ſoules this while; for now the Word cannot cure them of thoſe ſins which they would faine thinke (though their hearts tell them otherwiſe) to be no ſins: they can never humble themſelves by repentance for them; and therefore they ſtand guilty before Gods judgement-ſeat to anſwer for them, beſides all the hurt they ſhall in this life ſuſtaine in regard of them. Hurt that comes by diſguiſing of ſin.

4 A fourth ſort that come under this reproofe, are ſuch, as therein ſhew themſelves to be clokers of ſinne, that they do not uſe diligence to finde out their ſinnes: ſuch as are partiall in dealing with their owne ſoules, and in ſearching to find out their corruptions; that are loath to dig too deep, and throughly to ranſacke the loathſome corners of their hearts. He that doth not his beſt endeavour to come to the ſight of his ſecret ſinnes, is eſteemed of God to be a hider of them, and ſhall be deſtitute of that happineſſe and comfort that otherwiſe he might enjoy: and therefore as *David* exhorted his enemies for their good, to *examine their hearts upon their beds*, that ſo they might deſiſt from ſtanding out againſt him: ſo he practiſed it himſelfe for the good of his owne Soule, that he might not long go aſtray from the wayes of the Lord. *I have conſidered my wayes* (ſaith he) *and turned my feet into thy Teſtimonies.* 4
Such as are negligent in ſearching out their ſinnes.
Pſal. 4 4.
Pſal. 119. 59.

Secondly, this ſerves for our inſtruction: if we finde that we do not proſper in the things of the Lord, or of the world, *Ier.*

When we prosper not, fail to examination.

let us examine if there be not some secret sin that is the cause of it. One comes to the Word preached, and findes no helpe thereby, against the corruptions unto which he is inclined; nor for the practise of good duties, unto which he is exhorted: he cannot perceive, that there is wrought in him any great love unto the Saints, to the Ordinances of God, or to the coming of Christ, &c. But he is dull and heavy when he is at it, and as dead and lumpish when is gone from it. Let him search, and he shall find, that there lies in his heart some sinne or other unrepented, or the guilt of some duties unperformed, the venome whereof doth so poyson his conscience, that the Word of life can finde no place there; for when the Word comes to a pure heart, it will enter, and worke effectually.

Another comes to the Sacrament, and findes no benefit thereby. Let him looke, if there lurke not within him some hidden corruption, that is the cause hereof: for the Sacrament is mighty in operation, if it be received with a pure and holy affection; it is the very communion *of the Body and Blood of Christ*. And therefore search and cast forth that ill Leven that hath infected thy heart, and hindred thee from the comfort of this excellent Ordinance of God. And the like may wee say for Prayer, and any other of Gods Ordinances.

1 Cor 10.

Likewise for the things of the world: Do we not prosper in our estate, in our Bodies, in our Children, &c. Let us make triall, if there be not some wickednesse that hath countenance with us: and if there be, thence (may we be sure) comes all our woe. They that will not grieve for sinne, because it is sinne, shall be driven to grieve for it, by many sore troubles: and they that are insensible of it when it is commited, shall be made sensible in the end, by feeling it punished. And this is a good use that is made of the troubles of Gods Church, in the *Lamentations* of *Jeremy*: *Wherefore* (say they) *is the living man sorrowfull?* Why doth he turmoyle and vexe himselfe? *Man suffereth for his sinne.* What is the conclusion? *Let us search and try our wayes, and turne againe unto the Lord, &c. We have sinned and rebelled, therefore thou hast not spared, &c.*

Note.

Lam. 3.39,40.

Objection.

But we know no speciall sinne, that should procure this hand of God against us.

Trie

Trie your owne hearts and wayes diligently: and then, if you finde no ſuch iniquitie, your croſſe is in Mercy, and not in judgement; for Triall, and not for Puniſhment; a Medicine, to purge and cure; and not a Poyſon, to infect and deſtroy. But if we will have this comfort, we muſt ſtrive to finde out what is principally amiſſe in us; for the heart is deceitfull above all things, and the Devill would make us thinke that great faults are but ſmall faults, and that ſmall faults are no faults. Let us therefore bring our ſoules to the Touch-ſtone of Gods Law, and then we ſhall not be deceived: as he himſelfe ſaith; *I the Lord ſearch the heart:* So his Word is a diſcerner and a diſcoverer *of the thoughts and intents of the heart*, and will make us able to deſcrie the ſame. And this let us be aſſured of for our comfort, That he that is truly deſirous and withall induſtrious to finde out his ſpeciall ſinnes, he ſhall have them diſcovered unto him; becauſe that is the end why God ſmiteth him (as may appeare by that former place of the *Lamentations*) that he might be brought to the ſight and ſenſe of his tranſgreſſions, and to ſound humiliation for them. And therefore, they that upon a good and conſcionable ſearch made, can diſcerne of no groſſe or preſumptuous ſin in themſelves, may be comforted, notwithſtanding their croſſes, and reſt fully aſſured, that God will not lay any thing to their charge, becauſe they are enemies to ſinne, and not lovers or maintainers of the ſame. And thus much for the firſt Point. It followeth.

Answer.

Ier. 17. 9.

Ier. 17. 10. Heb. 4. 12.

Note.

[*But hee that confeſſeth.*] This is contrary to the former hiding of ſinne, when we ſo ſearch and ſift our hearts, that we come to the knowledge of our offences, and the acknowledgement of the ſame before the Lord. Whence this Doctrine may be gathered: that,

Whoſoever would finde pardon for his ſinnes, muſt confeſſe the ſame.

Doct. 1.

He that looks for remiſſion on Gods part, muſt bring confeſſion for his part: whereſoever ſinne is unacknowledged, there it is unpardoned: no mercie, till there bee a ſight and confeſſion of iniquitie.

2 Confeſſion neceſſarie, before remiſſion.

Therefore *Daniel* confeſſeth his owne ſinnes, the ſinnes of the

the people and the sinnes of their fore-fathers; and aggravates the same in many words, saying; *We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, yea wee have rebelled and have departed from thy precepts, and from thy judgements. We would not obey thy servants the Prophets that spake in thy Name, &c. Vnto us appertaineth open shame, to our Kings, to our Princes, and to our Fathers, &c. For wee have not obeyed the voyce of the Lord our God, &c. Yea, all Israel have transgressed the law, &c. Therefore the curse is powred upon us.*

Dan. 9 5, 6, 7, 8, 10.

And thus doth *Ezra* likewise in the behalfe of the people that had taken strange wives: for hauing *rent his clothes and his garment, he fell upon his knees, and spread out his hands unto the Lord his God, and said, O my God, I am confounded and ashamed to lift up mine eyes to thee my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, & our trespasse is gone up to heaven, &c.*

Ezra 9 5, 6.

The same course doth *Nehemiah* take: for thus he speaketh in the name of al Israel, *We haue grievously sinned against thee, and have not kept thy Commandements, nor the Statutes, nor the judgements which thou commandest thy servant Moses, &c.* So those that beleeved, *Act. 17. 19. came and confessed and shewed their workes.*

Neh. 1.7.

Reasons.

And there is reason to proove that this confession is verie necessarie, if ever we would finde favour with God: for,

1

God cannot in justice forgive sinne unlesse there bee confession.

1 Ioh. 1.9.

1 First, without it we have no promise belonging to us: as God cannot in justice with-hold mercy from such as plainly lay open their transgressions before him: so can he not without violating his truth, vouchsafe mercy to those that smother and hide their sinnes from him: for thus runnes the promise; *If we acknowledge our sins, hee is faithfull and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousnesse.* Whence we see that where there is a true acknowledgement of sin, there is promised both a true remitting of sin, and purging from sinne: but where that is wanting, no such thing can be expected.

2

Without it there is no repentance.

2 Secondly, those must needs have the gate of mercy shut against them, that do not confesse their faults unto the Lord, because acknowledgement of our guiltinesse is one of the first fruits of true Repentance, and one of the chiefe testimonies of a true penitent heart. As is manifest in *David*, who,

when

when his heart ſmote him after he had numbred the people, dealeth plainly with God; *O Lord* (ſaith he) *I have ſinned exceedingly in that I have done: Now O Lord I beſeech thee, take away the treſpaſſe of thy ſervant, for I have done very fooliſhly.* And all thoſe that are truely and throughly wounded in their ſoules for their offences, as *David* then was, will inforce themſelves to doe as he did; for till men frame to this confeſſion, it is certaine they are not yet at warre with their ſinnes.

3 Thirdly, to the intent we may the ſooner be perſwaded hereunto, we muſt underſtand that this is a very ſoveraigne preſervative againſt relapſes and backeſlidings: for he that hath once done this pennance before Gods Iudgement-ſeate, it wil be ſuch a corroſive unto his heart, that he will hardly fall into thoſe open and groſſe ſins twice, which he hath ſincerely and heartily acknowledged once. When *Peter* & *David* and *Paul* had attained to this, and laid open their ſins in an unfained confeſſion of them to the Lord, they never returned to thoſe ill practiſes againe. Infirmities and ſlips they had many in other kindes, but they were ſo fenced and fortified againſt thoſe particulars, that they ſtood ſtrong againſt them, and never fell againe into them whiles they lived.

3 It is a preſervative againſt revolting.

Objection.

4 Fourthly, this is a very effectuall meanes to quicken us unto prayer, and therefore ſtill in the Scripture we ſhall finde that where there hath beene hearty confeſſion, there have followed as hearty Petitions; as we ſee in the former example of *Daniel* & *Nehemiah*. For how vehement their requeſts were, may appeare in the places before alleadged, by the manner of putting them up, *O Lord heare, O Lord forgive, O Lord conſider, and doe it* (ſaith *Daniel*) *defer not for thine own ſake, O my God.* And *Nehemiah* commeth with the like importunity, *O Lord God of Heaven, the great and terrible God that keepeſt covenant and mercy, &c. I pray thee let thine eares be attent, and thine eyes open to heare the prayer of thy ſervant, which I pray before thee daily, day and night for the children of Iſrael thy ſervants. O Lord I beſeech thee, let thine eare now hearken to the prayer of thy Servant, &c.*

4 It quickens unto prayer.

Dan. 6. 16.

Neh. 1. 5. 6. 11.

5 Fiftly and laſtly, this is a very great meanes to glorifie God: in which regard *Ioſhua* ſaid unto *Achan*, *My ſonne I beſeech*

5 God is glorified thereby.

Ioſh. 7. 19.

beseech thee give glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him: and shew mee what thou hast done, hide it not from me. Now if any require, how we by this meanes should glorifie God: I answer, that we give him the glory: first, of his truth, in acknowledging that which his word chargeth upon us: secondly, of his Iustice, if he should proceed against us: and thirdly, of his mercy, in that we thereby imply, we have hope that he will forgive us. For, if we did expect no favour, we should never discover our filthy nakednesse before the eyes of the righteous Iudge of Heaven and Earth. Sith then, that without this confession there is no promise made unto us, no found repentance in us, no ability to resist corruption for the time to come: and whersoever this is (on the contrary side) it puts life into our prayers, and bringeth honor unto Gods name; the point is cleere and evident, that this confession is so necessarie, that without it, there is no mercy to be looked for from God.

Vse 1. Which maketh for the just reproofe and condemnation of those that faile in this dutie. They pretend they would faine have God to pardon their sinnes, but they will bring no bill of inditement against themselves, onely in generall they will acknowledge themselves to be sinners as they are, but will grow to no particulars at all. They have some wit and skill to set out other mens sins to the view of the world, in every branch and circumstance thereof: so that many times they make them greater in appearance than they are indeed: but come to any offence of their owne, and if you cannot prove it, they will not confesse it: if you can prove it, they will excuse it; It was not long of them, such and such provoked them, or intised and allured them: but that would not serve *Adams* turne, that *Eve* perswaded him to eate of the forbidden fruit: neither would that cleere *Ahab*, that *Iezabels* hand was chiefe in the murdering and robbing of *Naboth*. They should rather have harkned to Gods voice, than unto the wicked counsels and perswasions of any: and if they had any worke of Gods spirit in their hearts, they would charge themselves & not others. For grant that the occasions of their fall were from others, yet the cause was in themselves, even their owne cursed corruption, and

Note.

rebellious

rebellious disposition. And therefore their labouring to put off the blame and shame of their sins upon others, evidently proclaimeth that they have not an understanding mind, nor a broken and humble and penitent heart. And the like may be said of those that howsoever they will come to a recitall of divers misdemeanors, either before God or men, or both: as the qualitie of their offences require: yet they doe it so slightly and coldly, that though they name particulars, it is sure they are not touched with them: such a cold confession will bring as cold consolation; their faint and careless suing for pardon, is the next way to procure them a deniall.

Secondly, this is for instruction, that we doe our best indeavour to learne this Art of acknowledging our sins aright: let us leave off aggravating of other mens faults, and passe a hard censure and sentence upon our owne: for that will procure us most favour, and the largest measure of mercy from the Lord. *Vse 2.*

With earthly Iudges, the more is confessed by a Malefactor, the worse it is likely to goe with him: but it is otherwise with the great Heavenly Iudge: the larger and freer our confession is, the easier and surer and speedier shall our remission be: *If wee iudge our selves, we shall not be condemned of the Lord.* *Note.* 1 Cor. 11.

Now to the intent we may performe this duty the better, it will not be amisse to set down some rules for our direction herein. Rules for confession.

We must know therefore that in sound confession, these things are requisite:

1 That it proceed from a good roote.
2 That it be performed in a good manner.

1 For the first: if the root be rottrn and corrupt, the fruit springing from thence, cannot but be distastefull to the Lord.

Now, that the root may be sound, these things must bee looked unto in our confession.

1 That it proceed from a hatred of sinne.
2 From hope of mercy.

1 Con-

1 The root of confession.

1 Concerning the former, whereſoever the hatred of ſin is wanting (as it was in *Saul* and *Pharaoh*, when they made acknowledgement of their offences) it is plaine that the parties confeſſing are not weary of their ſins, but of their plagues, as *Pharaoh* was: that their acknowledgement proceedeth not from inward remorſe for their faults, but from ſome ſudden paſſion, and from the force of their naturall Conſcience; as in *Saul* it is evident: for both of them fell preſently to their old works and waies againe, and returned with the Dog to their vomit, and with the Sow to their wallowing in the mire; and ſo it is with many: when the ſnares of death lay hold of them, or ſome heavy plague lyeth upon them, or the flaſhings of a guilty Conſcience begin to ſcorch them, they are in great perplexity and anguiſh, even at their wits end, and know not what to doe, nor what courſe to take for the obtaining of ſome eaſe: And then, even as a Dog that hath overgorged his ſtomack, will vomit up that which paineth and troubleth him: ſo will they in like caſe vomit out ſome paſſionate confeſſion: looke what commeth firſt to their minds, and moſt troubleth and frighteth them, out it ſhall to one or other. But as the Dog when he is eaſed of his former paine, will return again to his lothſome vomit, and eate up that which before he had rid his ſtomacke of: ſo will they betake themſelves to their old cuſtome and faſhion of life againe, and fall to the freſh practiſe of thoſe odious and monſtrous evils which upon the bed of their ſickneſſe, or in the day of their heavineſſe, they in a word acknowledged and renounced as vile and abhominable. If now of Dogs they had beene made ſheepe, they would never have lapped up their filthy vomit againe, that were enough to poyſon a ſheepe, that pleaſeth a Dog.

It muſt proceede.

I From hatred of ſinne.

When & why hypocrites confeſſe.

And as *Saul* and *Pharaoh* dealt, ſo did the Iſraelites in the ſame ſort: when the wrath of God lay heauy upon them, *and he conſumed their daies in vanity, and their yeeres in mourning, &c. they returned and ſought God early:* But how? *they flattered with their mouth, & diſſembled with him with their tongue, For their heart was not upright with him, neither were they faithfull in his Covenant.*

Pſal. 78. 33, 34, 36, 37.

Note. When miſerie preſſed ſore upon them, then they ſeemed to fall

fall out with their ſinnes, whereas in truth they fell out onely with their croſſes, as the effect ſhewed, in that when their diſtreſſes were over, they ſinned ſtill againſt God, and provoked the moſt High, by their rebellions.

This then is the firſt thing neceſſarily required when wee make our Confeſſion, that it proceed from a hatred and indignation againſt our ſins, and againſt our ſelves for the ſame, 2 *Corinth.* 7. 11.

A ſecond thing is, that it muſt come from hope of mercy: For, if that be wanting, our confeſſing will but be a witneſſing againſt our ſelves for our deeper condemnation. And God may juſtly ſay unto us, as he did to that unprofitable ſervant in the Goſpel, *Out of thine own mouth will I condemn thee, thou evill ſervant.* If we plead guilty, and doe not ſue for a pardon (as we will never if we be deſtitute of hope) our caſe is ſo farre from being made better, that it is a great deale worſe. *Iudas* confeſſed that he had ſinned, betraying innocent bloud, yea & made reſtitution alſo: but it was wreſted from him through the horror of his Conſcience, & the fearefull apprehenſion of Gods wrath, beating upon his ſinfull heart: and therefore not expecting any mercy for his hainous offence, he never offered any prayer to God, but made a quicke diſpatch of himſelfe. Whereas, if his confeſſion had beene joyned with hope of favour, he would have fallen to mourning and lamentation for his ſinne, and ſo to an earneſt craving of pardon for it. Thus we ſee what is the root of ſound Confeſſion.

2 From hope of mercy.

Luke 19. 22.

It followeth to be conſidered, how it may be made in a good manner.

3 The manner of confeſſion.

And the firſt thing in that is, that we confeſſe heartily and ſincerely with ſorrow and ſhame, that we have provoked ſo gracious a God: So did the Publican, when he ſmote upon his breaſt, and ſaid, *Lord be merciſull unto me a ſinner.* And ſo did *Ephraim*: of whom the holy Ghoſt ſpeaketh in this manner. *I heard Ephraim lamenting thus: thou haſt corrected mee, and I was chaſtiſed as an untamed Calfe, &c. Surely after that I converted, I repented: and after that I was inſtructed, I ſmote upon my thigh: I was aſhamed, yea, even confounded, becauſe I did beare the reproach of my youth.* Where it is declared, that

1 It muſt be hearty.

Luk. 18. 13. Ierom. 31. 18.

that after they had been long and grievously afflicted, and began at length to be soundly humbled, they did not onely see and acknowledge thir sinnes, but were vexed and troubled, and even confounded at the consideration, and in the confession of them; yea, even of the follies and vanities of their youth, contrary to this practise of theirs, is the custome of many, who will reckon up and recount their severall iniquities before the Lord; but they doe it so idlely and drowsily as if it were nothing to offend him. Whereas if a child should come with such a rude and bold confession of his faults to his parents; or a wife speake so sleightly of her unchaste and unholy behaviour before her Husband, they would dislike the confession of the faults, as well as the faults themselves: and all that heard them would cry out upon them, there is an impudent Wife, and a graceless childe. And we must not conceive then, that God will be pleased with such lame and maimed Sacrifices. Let none be deceived, God will not be mocked, he pronounceth him accursed, whosoever he be that doth the worke of the Lord negligently.

Drowsie confession hateful.

Ier. 48. 2.

A second thing to be observed in the manner of it is, that we confesse not our sins in the lumpe only, and by whole sale as it were, but that we bring before his holy eyes our particular and speciall sins, which will be to us a testimony of great uprightnes; for we are naturally prone, either to content our selves with a generality of Confession, that we are great sinners, the Lord be mercifull unto us, &c. which we may do for our credit, because we should be esteemed penitent persons: or if we come to particulars, we will rather meddle with any, than with our beloved sins, which are so deepely rooted, that we must breake up the fallowe ground of our hearts, and put our selves to paine before we can be purged from them. This therefore argueth great sincerity, when we can bring our capitall and head sinnes to arraignement: as the holy Apostle *Paul* did, when once hee was throughly converted: *I was* (saith he) *a blasphemer, and a persecuter, and an oppressor*. And likewise *Ezra*, who acknowledged in the behalfe of the people their maine great sinne of marrying strange wives, whose practise if we can follow, we shall have that good evidence

2

It must be particular, and of speciall sinnes.

Note this corruption.

1 Tim. 1. 13.

Ezra 6.

of

of soundnesse and uprightnesse in our soules that they had.

3 Thirdly, this makes for the singular comfort of Gods Children, that can particularly aggravate their secret sinnes, that no body in the world can touch them for: their beloved sinnes, which heretofore they would not for a Kingdome have parted from. That no malicious revengefull wicked man can so set out the faults of his enemy, whom hee hates with a deadly hatred, as they can the corruptions of their owne hearts and lives. *Vse 3.*

This is a signe that their Consciences are touched by the holy Spirit of grace, whose speciall and proper worke it is, to convince the heart of sinne, *Iohn 16. verse 18.* Such have lowly mindes, and broken hearts. The Law may make one confesse his faults to men in a passion, but it can never make a man lay them open before God in true contrition: that is a worke of the spirit of Iesus Christ. Let such goe on still, and they shall finde good successe; We are given to speake the worst of our adversaries, and to set forth their vile practises to the uttermost, before such are able and ready to take them downe: what greater enemy have we than sinne? And where can we complaine better than unto the living God, who is of infinite mercy to pardon, and of infinite power to subdue our greatest and strongest corruptions? Let us make our moane to him, and he will have compassion on us: for he knoweth our hearts, and the venome and strength of our corruptions, better then we our selves doe; and if we confesse them heartily, particularly, and constantly before him, he hath given us two pawnes, to wit, his faithfulnesse, and his Iustice, for the remission and suppression of them: If hee should not forgive us, and heale our natures when wee have done our part, he should forfeit his Truth and his Iustice, which cannot be changed, but continue the same for evermore. *Note.* 1 Ioh. 1. 9.

[*And forsaketh them.*] This must, and will follow upon the former: and this offereth unto us another point of Doctrine, namely: that, *Doct. 3.*

It is not sufficient to confesse sinne, but we must also leave and forsake it.

Sinne must be renounced as well as confessed.

We must renounce and abandon the allowance of every infirmity, and the practise of every grosse sinne.

Isay. 55.7.

This, as it is commanded by the Prophet *Isaiah*, who saith, *Let the wicked forsake his waies, and the ungodly his owne imaginations, &c.* So was it practised by those worthy and excellent Converts, mentioned in the *Acts of the Apostles*, who did not onely acknowledge their vile and naughty practises, but to shew their thorow detestation of them, and their resolution to forsake them, brought their curious Bookes and burnt them openly, though the price of them amounted to a great value: that so, those that had been witnesses of their sin, might also be witnesses of their Repentance: and that neither themselves nor others might be infected by those Books afterwards: and that those whose hearts were not yet touched with remorse for that sinne, might by their example be drawne to a dislike of it, and to hearty sorrow and repentance for it.

Note.

And that a sound confession, and a holy reformation goe together, might be further proved by the examples of *David*, of *Peter* and of *Paul*, which were formerly alledged, who having once made acknowledgement of their sins, never fell to committing of them any more. And reason will shew the same more fully and cleerely: for,

Reasons.

1 Without reformation, there is no sound repentance.

1 First, if there be not a leaving of sin, sure it is, there is no sound Repentance: for, if there were the thorow hatred and unfained sorrow for sinne (before mentioned) it would kill the same at the very root, and then it would dye also in the branches.

2 No faith.

Acts 15.9.

2 This redressing of a mans waies, as well as confessing of his faults, it is very needfull, because otherwise one can haue no assurance that he hath Faith, for that purifies the heart, and if the heart be cleane, all that proceeds from it will be answerable thereunto. A pure fountaine cannot send forth impure streames.

3 There is not the Spirit.

3 Further, hee may be certaine, that the Spirit of Christ dwels not in his heart: for whereloever that takes possession, it expels sinne, and will not suffer such filthy ware to rest in that roome where it doth remaine: and if it be not in the

Ware-

Warehouſe it cannot be brought forth into the Shop.

This ſerves for the reproofe of thoſe, that ſay, and will ſtand to it, that they have repented, and do repent daily: and why? they confeſſe their ſinnes every day. But have they mended their faults that they have ſo often confeſſed? Nay, they cannot ſay ſo: though they repent every day, they mend no day; then let them looke for no mercy. But to come more nearely to ſuch kinde of men; they affirme they have acknowledged their ſwearing and blaſpheming: their drunkenneſſe, and ſwilling: their brawling and contending: their rayling and reviling of ſuch as are better than themſelves: they have confeſſed theſe and the like to be great faults, and have beene ſorrowfull in their hearts for them: but have they left theſe foule ſinnes? O no, fleſh and bloud is weake; and all have their infirmities, and ſo have they infirmities. Nay, theſe are groſſe preſumptuous evils, and ſuch as howſoever being weighed in the ballance of the fleſh, they ſeeme light; yet being weighed in the ballance of the Sanctuary, they will be found ſufficient to preſſe them downe unto the pit of hell, if they ceaſe not from the practice of them. And where they ſay that fleſh and bloud is weake, let them know, that if they be but fleſh and bloud, they can never enter into the kingdome of heaven. They that are Chriſts, have crucified the fleſh with the luſts and affections thereof: neither *are wee any longer debtors to the fleſh, to live according thereunto: but we muſt mortifie the deeds of the fleſh by the Spirit*: that howſoever ſinne will ſtill remaine in us, yet it may not *raigne in our mortall bodies*, that we ſhould *obey it in the luſts thereof*, or that our *members ſhould be weapons of unrighteouſneſſe* for the execution of evill any more. And this we may boldly ſay, that whoſoever liveth in thoſe forenamed ſinnes, or the like, never yet knew what repentance for ſinne, and ſound confeſſion of ſinne, meaneth. And therefore what good conceit ſoever ſuch have of themſelves, they do but flatter themſelves, and diſſemble, and ſpeake with a double heart. If they have had ſome gripings for their ſcandalous and ſinfull manner of living, and thereupon have caſt forth ſome peece of a confeſſion, the beſt that they can make of it, is but this, that they have beene Dogge-ſicke (as was ſhewed before)

Vſe 1.

Note.

Rom. 8.

Rom. 6.

before) and ſo diſgorged their ſtomackes of that that pained them: not in any hatred of the things (for they return to their vomite againe) but in deſire to be exempted and freed from thoſe bitter pangs and helliſh tortures which they finde in their ſoules. At moſt they are but as the Sow that hath beene waſhed, ſeeing that they returne to their old filthines. There hath beene onely a change of the outſide, none at all of the inſide: for, if their nature had beene altered and renewed, their words and works would have been reformed, and that not for a fit, but for ever, in the whole courſe of their carriage afterwards. They might indeed now and then meet with a rub, and ſtumble ſometimes, but their walke for the moſt part, ſhould be in the wayes of godlineſſe; and though they did fall, they ſhould riſe againe, becauſe the Lord *would put under his hand.*

Pſal. 37.

Note. Therefore let all men carefully look unto themſelves: if they were ſwearers before the Sacrament, and be ſwearers ſtill: if idle perſons, unthrifts, ſcoffers, &c. before they come to the Word, and continue to be ſuch ſtill, their caſe is fearefull. Let them be afraid how they ſtand in the courts of Gods houſe to heare; and how they draw neere to the Lords Table to receive the holy things of God. For if they come not to be helped gainſt thoſe grievous ſinnes which heretofore they have lived in, let them know, they ſhall finde no mercy: and if they finde not mercy, they ſhall be ſure to meet with judgement: they ſhall not miſſe of one. And howſoever they may bragge that they truſt to be ſaved as well as the beſt, when their lives are as bad as the worſt; yet they ſhall find at the time of death and when the horrible terrors of their guilty conſciences ſhall ſurpriſe them, that all ſuch boaſting hath been vaine: and that true repentance conſiſts in a change of the life without, as well as of the heart within: and then if they have not forſaken their ſinnes, they ſhall be in danger, and in feare to go from the bitter pangs of death to the everlaſting paines of hell.

Note.

Vſe 2. Meanes to attaine to reformation.

In the ſecond place, ſeeing it is ſo dangerous to make ſemblance that we are touched with repentance for ſinfull courſes, when we proceed not to a reformation of the ſame, therefore it behooves us to uſe all good meanes, whereby we may attaine to this reformation: ſuch as are theſe that follow.

1. Firſt,

1 First, we must constantly and carefully avoid all the occasions of those sins which we pretend that we have been humbled for. If one would not be a Gamester any more, let him avoid the company of Gamesters: if one would not be overtaken with incontinency & intemperancy, or the like, let him never frequent such places, nor associate himselfe with such persons, as that any temptation should by such meanes be offered unto him. Our nature is as Tinder: if others do but cast the least sparke upon us, we are in danger to take fire presently: and therefore as we will not set flax, or any such combustible matter neere the Chimney, for feare of the worst: so let not us adventure to thrust our selves into any place where there is perill of infection: but bee jealous of our selves in eschewing all inducements, as unto any, so especially unto our owne sinnes, and those vices that we are most prone unto.

1
Avoid the occasions of evill.

Our pronenesse to sinne.

Secondly, as we ought to forbeare all meanes of evill, so we must use all means of goodnes: not one or two of the meanes, but every one of them in their places: for otherwise if we refuse all of them, or any of them, it is a righteous judgement of God that we should live and die in our sins. Therefore let us give our selves to reading, if we can; to hearing, if we cannot reade, and to meditate on the Word: chiefely on such places as make most against our owne corruptions; fast, pray, receive the Sacrament, use godly conference, and then using these meanes conscionably, we shall finde that every one of them will worke some Grace, and minister unto us strength and vertue against our speciall sins, and all rightly used, will make us conquerours over all our sinnes.

2
Vse all meanes of goodnesse.

Thirdly, if at any time we be overtaken by infirmity (as who is not often? *for in many things we offend all*) let us lament and bewaile our offences, and that presently upon the committing of them: for if sinne be quickly and heartily lamented, the course thereof will be speedily stayed, and we shall gaine by an infirmity, which is by that meanes soundly healed. For our experience of our owne weaknesse, and so our humility will be encreased: our discerning of the subtleties of Sathan, and the deceitfulnesse of sinne, and our care and wretchfulnes to resist it hereafter, will he thereby augmented.

3
Bewayle infirmities speedily Iam. 3. 1.

4 Covenant with God to fight against our maſter ſinnes.

Fourthly and laſtly, if none of theſe meanes will ſerve the turne, we muſt binde our ſelves by a ſolemne vow and covenant to labour and ſtrive againſt our principall and moſt dangerous corruptions; and to abandon them whatſoever become of us. And though we may be tempted, and that often and ſtrongly, yet we muſt reſolve (by Gods grace) never to yeeld unto them againe. If we could thus earneſtly ſet againſt our ſinnes, Sathans aſſaults would be nothing ſo ſtrong: for if we did manfully reſiſt the Divell, he *would flie from us like a Coward*: and his inſtruments ſeeing us reſolute, would have no heart to meddle with us, and if we ſhould fall once or twice afterwards, the breach of our vow would ſo pierce & wound our hearts, that it would make us much ſtronger againſt new aſſaults. And the true reaſon why the Divell is ſo violent in tempting, and we ſo weake in reſiſting, is, becauſe we hang off, and halt betweene two opinions as it were, and have ſuch faint reſolutions of forſaking our ſinnes, and do ſeldome and ſleightly make covenants for the repreſſing of them.

Iames 4. 7.

Note.

Vſe 3.

Thirdly, this is for exceeding great comfort unto thoſe of Gods children that have attained to ſuch a meaſure of ſound godly ſorrow, that for their great and groſſe ſinnes, they have (by Gods mercy) left them all, ſo that they would not commit them againe for a thouſand worlds. This is an infallible token of an upright heart, and ſuch may be ſure that they have a portion in the mercies of God, which he promiſeth to his choſen people, who confeſſe and leave thir ſinnes.

Objection.

Oh, but they finde many paſſions and infirmities ſtill.

Anſwer.

Be it ſo: yet if they ceaſe to love them, and to give entertainment to them, all is well. For preſumptuous and offenſive evils, we muſt ceaſe to practiſe them: but for humane frailties, it is impoſſible that the moſt penitent man ſhould be quite freed from them. If our hearts check us, and we deſire to have others reprove us, and uſe the meanes before ſet downe, whereby more Grace may be every day conveyed unto us, though we be overtaken many times, as a Bird in the ſnare, before we be aware, and have a ſudden flaſhing in our affections, that is ready to ſhew forth it ſelfe in our outward actions; yet our hearts are ſound and ſincere notwithſtanding:

How to diſcerne that our ſinnes are but frailties.

neither

neither ſhould we keepe from our ſoules that comfort which doth belong unto us.

[*Shall finde mercy.*] Here is the promiſe of God upon our obedience: and this we may be aſſured of. Whence the Doctrine is:

That whatſoever we have beene, or whatſoever our ſinnes have beene, if we can bring confeſſion and reformation, we ſhall finde mercy: God will pitty us, and have compaſſion on us (as the word ſignifieth.) 1. Firſt, we ſhall have remiſſion of ſinnes. 2. Secondly, the healing thereof, that we ſhall never be under the bondage of it any more. 3. Thirdly, the Lord will accept of us, and of our ſervices, and make all the meanes comfortable and profitable unto us. When we come to the Miniſtery, he will write his Lawes in our hearts. When we come to the Sacrament, we ſhall not onely receive the bleſſed Bread & Wine, but we ſhal have communion with the Sonne of God. When we offer up our prayers, God will heare in heaven, and have mercy upon us, and fulfill our hearts deſire. All theſe things are promiſed in the Covenant ſet downe *Ezek.* 36.25. and *Jere.* 31.31. as alſo *Iſa.* 1.18. which Text is handled in the next Sermon; and therefore to that place, the larger handling of this point ſhall be referred. Onely a word or two for the uſe of it.

Doct. 4. Mercy for the penitent. Wherein it conſiſts.

1. Cor. 10.

Which is for very great conſolation unto Gods Servants; who need not be diſcouraged by any of their former ſins, but may make full account, that if they have acknowledged their evill works, and cleanſed and redreſſed their ſinfull wayes, God will be (nay is already) reconciled unto them. When the prodigall Sonne reſolved to come home unto his Father, and to take new wayes, and though he had been an unthrift before yet he would now mend and reforme all: his Father never charged him with old matters, neither needed he becauſe he charged himſelfe. If an earthly Father will and ſhould deale thus, how much more will the Father of all mercies deale graciouſly with his children, that humble themſelves before him and remove their ſins out of his ſight: eſpecially ſith the greater mercy he ſheweth to his owne children, the more glorie he ſhall gaine to his owne Name.

Vſe.

Luke 15.

There-

Therefore let us make full reckoning that we shall not only meete with Gods Ministers at the meanes, but with God himself who will pardon that which is past; and confirme and strengthen us unto every good worke for the time to come: who will give us the power of godlinesse, & the life of grace: who in a word will grant us (and there confirme his grant unto us) the right unto, and use of all his mercies & blessings whatsoever, with the removall of all hurtfull crosses. When the first *Adam* did but once eate of the forbidden fruit, it was enough to infect him and all his posterity, though there were but one threatning annexed to it, and none did taste of it but he alone. And why should not we expect on the other side, that when our second *Adam*, Iesus Christ, hath eaten of the commanded fruit, and hath sanctified it unto us by his example, word and prayer, and annexed many promises unto it, and we our selves also do often receive it: why (I say) should not we beleeve that it shall be more sufficient and forcible to minister holinesse and happinesse unto us, than was the forbidded fruit, to bring sinne and misery upon us? especially since it is certaine, that none ever sped ill at the Sacrament, but they that came with ill and hypocriticall hearts thereunto: and as every ones confession and reformation hath beene more found and faithfull, and his resolution to cleave unto God more firme and constant: so his comfort hath been more large and durable.

Note this comparison.

THE

THE SECOND SERMON of the LORDS SUPPER.

ISAIAH 1.

Ver. 16. *Wash you, make you cleane: take away the evill of your works from your eyes: cease to do evill,*

17 *Learne to do well: seeke judgement, relieve the oppressed: judge the fatherlesse, and defend the widow.*

18 *Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sinnes were as crimson, they shall be made as white as snow, though they were red like scarlet, they shall be as wooll.*

19 *If ye consent to obey, ye shall eate the good things of the Land.*

IN the former part of this Chapter, the Prophet hath charged these Iewes, that though they carried the name of Gods children, and of Gods people, and thought themselves in very good case, yet they were indeed notable Traitors and Rebels against him; which rebellions of theirs is set out by two comparisons: for first he compares them with the Oxe and the Asse, which though they be of the dullest sort of creatures, yet the one *knowes and remembers his owner*; and the other his *Masters cribbe*: and where they have received kindnes, they will acknowledge it, and do service for it. But these Iewes, though they had beene fed at full, and received innumerable blessings from the Lord, yet they were unmindfull of God, and of his favours, & more unteachable, untractable, and unserviceable than were the Oxe or the Asse.

They

They consider not whence, nor why, they had those many mercies which they enjoyed, and therefore did service therewith, not to God, but to their owne lusts.

2 Secondly, having compared them to the dullest Beasts, and proved them to be inferior unto those unreasonable creatures; He after makes comparison betwixt them and the vilest sinners in the world; to wit, the *Sodomites:* to whom they were so like for their idlenes, pride, excesse, and cruelty, that he cals them by that name, *Verse* 10. saying; *Heare the word of the Lord, O ye Princes of Sodome: hearken unto the Law of our God, O people of Gomorrah.*

But against this they might except, and say to the Prophet, you do us wrong in thus charging and vilifying us: we are other manner of people than you take us for, and would make us seeme to be: we have many things to commend us which neither Beasts nor Sodomites have: for we offer multitudes of Sacrifices; and observe solemne dayes and Feasts, the new Moones, and Sabbaths, and make many prayers, &c.

This he yeelds they did, but thence taketh advantage, and doubleth his accusation against them, turning all these things to their deeper condemnation, *ver.* 11.12.13.14. *What have I to do with the multitude of your Sacrifices, saith the Lord? I am full of the burnt-offerings of Rams, &c. When ye come to appeare before me, who required this of your hands, to tread in my Courts? Bring no moe Oblations in vaine: Incense is an abhomination unto me: I cannot suffer your new Moones, nor Sabbaths, nor solemne dayes (it is iniquity) nor solemne Assemblies. My soule hateth your new Moones, &c.* And there is reason why God should thus abhorre both them and the worship they offered unto him. For (it is added) *ver.* 15. when they stretched out their hands to prayer, *their hands were full of blood*, that is, they were full of revenge, full of cruelty and contention, and therefore they must needs performe those Religious Exercises hypocritically and carnally: in which respect they were worse than Sodomites: for they did but abuse their time to idlenesse, their apparell to pride: their Dyet to excesse, &c. but the Iewes abused the Word, and the Sacrifices, and the Sabbaths, and other ordinances of God: and therefore as much

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as ſpirituall things are better then naturall, ſo much worſe were they that prophaned the former, than the *Sodomites* that abuſed the latter.

Thus having ſhewed them how bad they were, he leaveth them not here, but telleth them how all might be amended. *Verſe* 16. *Waſh you, make you cleane, &c.* as if hee ſhould have ſaid, I have ſhewed that you have polluted and defiled your ſelves beyond the *Sodomites*, and ſo are become exceeding uncleane and unholy; yet if you will take my adviſe, and follow my counſell, I will ſhew you a way how you ſhall helpe all, and that is, to waſh and cleanſe your ſelues from this your filthineſſe, by godly and hearty ſorrow for the ſame: and whereas you will be ready to conceive that this is a matter eaſily and quickly done, I tell you that it is otherwiſe, and therefore bid you *waſh you, make you cleane*: purge your hearts and your hands, and waſh and waſh, againe and againe: and never leave waſhing till you have made your ſelfe throughly cleane. Connexion.

Then further, that they might not deceive themſelves, hee declareth unto them more particularly what ſins they ſhould waſh away: *Take away the evil of your workes, &c.* herein including an anſwer to another objection, that the hearts of ſome might make, concerning their Sacrifices and their Prayers, &c. before mentioned: for they might reply upon the Prophet in this manner; you finde fault with our Oblation, and tell us that God loathes our Sacrifices and ſervices; what then, would you have us doe? ſhould we leave off theſe workes of Pietie, and quite give over ſerving of God?

Not ſo (ſaith the Prophet:) but *Take away the evil of your workes*: doe the works ſtill, but remove that which God hates in them; retaine the matter, but reforme the manner of them. Now, whereas ſome might be ſo ſhameleſſe as to ſay, we have done ſo already and doe ſo ſtill: who can charge us with the evill of our works, or with hollowneſſe and hypocriſie in the performance of them?

To that he makes anſwere in theſe words, *Take away the evil of your works, (from before mine eyes.)* As if he ſhould ſay, if you might be judged by men, like your ſelves, you would make a faire ſhew: but in religious exerciſes you appeare be-

fore the Lord, who hath fiery eyes, and espieth the least blemish in our services: and therefore looke that he see nothing in them displeasing unto him: for otherwise, howsoever men commend you and your workes, God will reject both them and you. After this he proceedeth, and sheweth, that if they must take away the evill of their best works, much more must they desist from their evill works: and therefore he addeth, *Cease to doe evill.*

And yet this is not enough, but he exhorts them further, *doe well*: and because they were ill Scholars, and altogether
Verse 17. unskilfull in heavenly matters, he bids them [*learne to do well*] as who would say, You are naturally witty to invent mischiefe and iniquity; but for good you have no wisedome, nor sound understanding, you know not what to doe, nor how to doe: you have neither a good Iudgement, nor a pure affection, and therefore *learne to doe well.*

Then for their better direction, he commeth to the particular, *Seeke Iudgement, &c.* as if he should have told them in more words; you have beene given to oppression heretofore, and have done much wrong to poore men, that could not make good their part against you: this hath beene your sinne, to deale craftily and unrighteously: but now take a better course; *Seeke Iudgement*, that is, labour to finde out what is right; and when you know it, practise it accordingly; and deale with others, as you would be dealt withall: give over your cruelty, and exercise mercy: and be so farre from oppressing any more, that now yee *relieve the oppressed*: and so farre from doing hurt hereafter, that you forth-with strive to doe good: especially to the poore, and such as stand in most need of your helpe and relieefe: not such poore as by their owne lewdnesse and misdemeanor have cast themselves, and doe still plunge themselves farther into miserie: but *iudge the Father lesse, and defend the Widdow*; and stretch forth your helping hand to relieve such as are most worthy of it, and have most need of it.

Having thus urged them to sound Repentance, to the end that they might have no pretence to keepe them from setting upon it, he removeth certaine doubts that might arise

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in their hearts to hinder them, *Verse* 18. And before hee commeth to them, hee maketh preparation thereunto, saying, *Come, let us reason together*. As though he should say, now I have plainely proved that it stands you upon to repent, and have shewed you how you should repent, I know you shall have divers reasons from your selves, and from the world to the contrary: but hearken not what your flesh, or Sathan, or men can say, but what God saith, *Come, let us reason together*.

Now, the first Objection to keepe them from turning unto God (as may appeare by the answere here set downe) is this; You have charged us to be worse than Beasts or *Sodomites*, to be full of cruelty and bloud, and our consciences tell us no lesse: seeing then we are sunke so deepe in our iniquities, it seemes our state is unrecoverable, and so it is boodelesse for us to set upon the worke of our repentance. *Objection.*

Nay (saith he) not so, for though you be so stained with sinne and impietie, as I have said; that not onely your hands, but your soules & bodies, & all be wholly imbrued with bloudy and cruell dealing, & your sins be as red as Scarlet or Crimson, which are double dyed, and dyed in the woolle, so that you thinke it impossible to be brought to any whitenesse and pureness againe (as indeed, in regard of men, it is impossible) yet God is able to make you *as white as snow*. Albeit you have received a double dye of sinne, one in your conception, and another in the whole course of your conversation all your life long: yet the Lord is of that power, that he is able to make you *as white as woolle*. There is no sin so hainous, no sinner so abhominable, but upon his humiliation and conversion, he can and will make him as cleane and as pure, as just and as righteous as *Adam* was before his fall, and as if he had never transgressed at all. Not that he shall be without infirmities: but in Gods account, and acceptance through Christ, he shall be as pure as the Angels are now in heaven, or as he himselfe shall be, when he is an heire of glory in that blessed kingdome. For whersoever sinne is pardoned, there it is covered from Gods eyes: he will except neither against the greatnesse, nor against the multitude of them: but *where sinne hath abounded,* *Answer.* Psal. 32. Rom. 5. 20.

grace

grace shall much more abound. So much for the first Objection.

Objection. 2 The second might be this; if we should get a pardon for all our transgressions, and be at peace with God, and our owne consciences; yet the Law is so perfect, & we so imperfect, that so holy and pure, and we so unholy, and impure: that we shall never hold out in a constant course of obedience thereunto, but shall presently foule our selves againe, after that we have beene washed; and therefore as good never a whit, as never the better: as good never to beginne, as not to continue.

Answer. Verse 19. To that he answereth: that if they doe but consent, and be willing *to obey* (for so it is in the originall) *they shall eat the good things of the Land.* Which is in effect, as if he should have said: When once you have truely and thorowly repented you are not any longer under the rigor of the Law, but under Grace; you come not to a rigorous and severe Iudge, but to a mercifull and kinde Father, that looks not for perfect obedience, but accepts of a minde that is willing to know and keep the Commandements; who doth not require of penitent sinners that they should fulfill the Law (for that Christ alone could doe, and did in our behalfe) but onely that they should labour & strive to doe their best, and where they come short, acknowledge their fault. And that God will take in good worth this kind of obedience, he will testifie and make cleere not onely by bestowing inward blessings upon the Soule, but also outward blessings for their estate. *You shall eate the good things of the Land.*

Objection. 3 But in the third place, some might object and say, it were well if we could frame to be religious: but I hope God will shew mercy, though there be no such washing and such adoe made about our sins, and therefore I meane to take my liberty still, and never to trouble my selfe about the matter.

To this he makes answer, *Vers.* 20. telling them that if they *refuse to obey*, and to do the former duties, *They shall be devoured with the Sword:* that is, they shall have some fearefull judgement or other to overtake and consume them; for under that one particular of the Sword, is implyed any other plague wherewith God would visite them, if they persisted in their disobedience. And to prove all, he brings one maine

Argument

Argument, *The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.* As if he had said: Though those that repent, see little likelihood of recoverie, let them not despaire; and though those that be impenitent, see little danger of an overthrow: yet let them not presume: for the Lord will assuredly bring to passe that which he hath promised to the godly in mercy, and that which he hath threatned against the wicked in judgement.

So that you see the summe of these words is,

An exhortation to repentance, and an offer of reconciliation and salvation to all repentant sinners. Wherein is shewed:

1 First, what they must doe, to the 18. *verse*. Namely, that they ought,

1 Bewaile their sinnes, and forsake them. 16.

2 Learne their duties, and doe them.

2 Secondly, reasons to stirre them up so to doe.

1 One, taken from the benefit that will redound unto them, if they practise the former things; to wit, that they shall be sure of the free and ful pardon of all their sinnes; and they and their services shall be accepted and blessed of God.

2 Another, taken from the danger they are in, if they refuse to doe this; they shall surely tast of some feareful vengeance of God: *Yee shall bee devoured by the Sword.*

Wash you, &c. In these words he alludeth to the custome of the Ceremoniall Law, mentioned in *Exodus*; where God expressely commanded, that before the people should heare the Law delivered from Mount *Sinai, they should sanctifie themselves, and wash their cloathes.* Whereby two things were signified: Exod. 19. 10.

1 First, that all in themselves are uncleane, and so unfit to present themselves before the eyes of the holy God.

2 Secondly, that (notwithstanding this) if they indeavour to wash themselves, the Lord will be pacified towards them, and receive both them and their services. Now this washing which he exhorts them unto, is, that which was figured by that outward washing & cleansing of themselves, and is to be performed of all that hope for mercy from the Lord: and this

must be done, by lamenting and grieving for their corrupt and sinfull nature and behaviour, whether against God or men. This is all the washing that we can attaine unto, or that God looketh for at our hands. For to speake properly, nothing can cleanse us but Christ his bloud, which is therefore called *cleane water, Ezek. 36. 25.* And none can performe that worke, but God alone. And therefore in that place he appropriateth that action unto himselfe, saying; *I will poure cleane water upon you, &c. From all your filthinesse, and from all your Idols will I cleanse you.*

Ezek. 36. 25.

Here then the purpose and drift of the Prophet is thus much; namely, that we should joyne with God as working Instruments, in reforming our hearts, & redressing our waies.

Doct. 1. What washing is required of us.

Whence ariseth this point of Doctrine. That whosoever would have God to wash them by the bloud of his Son, must wash themselves by godly sorrow.

Before the Lord promiseth any cleansing on his part, he requireth this kind of purging on our part. This is cleare in the Epistle of *Iames*; where he urgeth them to *draw neere unto the Lord*, (to wit, in the Ministerie of the Word, in partaking of the holy Sacrament, in faithfull and fervent prayer, and the rest of Gods Ordinances) and then he telleth them, that *God will draw neere unto them*; namely, in his mercy and goodnesse, and in all the fruits and effects thereof. But then they must wash themselves; for he is a God of pure eyes, and cannot indure iniquity: and therefore he saith, *Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purge your hearts, ye Hypocrites.* But they might reply and say, Is it so easie a matter to cleanse our hearts and our hands? Doth not sin cleave fast, and sticke close unto the soule?

Iam. 4. 8, 9.

It doth so indeed: and yet if they would follow his direction, he sheweth them a way how they might quickly be rid of their corruptions, so that they should not raigne over them, though they did remaine in them; and that is, *Afflict your selves, and sorrow and weepe: let your laughter, and jesting, and foolish sporting, be turned into mourning; & your joy, into heavinesse & lamentation for your iniquities & provocations, wherby you have incensed the Lord.* And then, though they were brought never so low, yet if they begin to cast downe them-

selves

ſelves before the Lord, he will aſſuredly raiſe them up, as there it followeth.

This duty is further commanded in the Propheſie of *Jeremie*, where he ſpeaketh to the whole Church of the Iewes in this manner: *O Ieruſalem, waſh thy heart from thy wickedneſſe, that thou mayeſt be ſaved: How long ſhall thy wicked thoughts remaine within thee?* In which place is declared what they muſt waſh, even *their hearts:* For they being made cleane, whatſoever proceedeth from thence, muſt needs be ſutable thereunto. Secondly, from what they muſt waſh them; *from their wickedneſſe.* And laſtly, to what end; *that they might be ſaved.* As if the Prophet had told them in plainer termes: God is readie to give you ſalvation and deliverance, both from your ſinnes, and from your miſeries; but your owne backwardneſſe hindreth good things from you: you doe not your duty, and therefore God with-holds his mercy: And therefore *waſh thine heart, O Ieruſalem, that thou maieſt be ſaved.* Iere. 4. 14.

And that they needed this waſhing, he proveth by this evill fruit that did continually ſpring out of their ſinfull heart, ſaying, *How long ſhall thy wicked thoughts remain within thee?* As if he had ſaid; If you doubt of the badneſſe of your hearts, looke what thoughts you entertaine therein; in the night and in the day; when you are at home, and when you are abroad; on the way, as you ride or walke; on your beds, as you ſleepe or wake, &c. Conſider how many vaine and idle thoughts, how many worldly and covetous deſires, how many luſtfull and carnall, yea wicked and impious imaginations you have ſwarming, & as it were muſtering together by whole troopes and armies within your minds, and within your hearts; every one of which is a ſufficient ſummons, to put you in minde to cleanſe your ſoules: for if they were pure and undefiled, ſuch cogitations and affections would not be ſtirring there, neither ſo often nor ſo much as now they are.

The Prophet *Ioel* in like ſort urgeth the ſame upon thoſe of his time, ſaying, *Rent your hearts and not your cloaths, &c.* But how muſt that be done? he had told the in the *verſe* immediately going before; *Turne unto the Lord with all your heart, & with faſting, & with weeping, & with mourning:* which is thus Ioel 2. 13. Vers. 12.

much in effect; Vse all meanes to get godly sorrow, and holy remorse for sinne; for that is it, that will bruise the heart indeed, and make it gentle & pliable: For as worldly griefe and heavinesse doth harden the heart, and maketh it like a Flint; so spiritual griefe doth soften it, and makes it tender as flesh: And a fleshly heart is alwaies a cleane heart, as doth appeare in that former place of *Ezekiel*; where softnesse of heart is set downe as an effect, that ever followeth upon the thorow cleansing of the heart. And as this is commended, so the practise thereof is prophecied and foretold by *Zachary*, in his 12. *Chap.* and the good issue and effect thereof declared in the 13. *Chap.* As touching the first, we may read it in the 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. verses of the former chapter: *I will poure upon the House of David* (saith God) *and upon the inhabitants of Ierusalem, the Spirit of Grace, &c. & they shall lament, &c.* Where we may note first, the grievousnesse of their mourning (when once Gods holy Spirit hath entred into their hearts) in that they should make such wofull lamentation, as one would doe *for his onely Son, and for his first borne*: Or as the *Israelites* did for *Iosiah*, their godly, and zealous, and faithfull King and Governor, when he was slain by *Necho*, King of *Ægypt*, in the valley of *Megidda*, where *Ieremie* & all the rest mourned for him with an exceeding bitter lamentation. And secondly, we may note the sincerity thereof, in that they should not weepe for company (as an hypocrite may doe) but every one apart, and secret, before the Lord. For so it is said, *And the Land shall bewaile, every family apart, the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart, the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart, &c. all the families that remaine, every family apart, and their wives apart.*

The effect of godly sorrow.

Ezek. 36. 25.

Zech 12. 10. &c.

2 Chron. 35. 25.

Verse 12.

Then for the good effect that should follow thereupon, it is contained & expressed, *Chap.* 13. *verse* 1. the words are these: *In that day there shall be a Fountaine opened to the house of David, and to the Inhabitants of Ierusalem, for sin, and for uncleanesse.* Whence it may be gathered, that when once we fall a washing in this sort, wee shall not long wash alone, but God will joyne with us, and open a Fountaine of mercy unto us, to wash away all manner of sinnes whatsoever they are, or have

Zech. 13. 1.

have beene; and to give us grace instead thereof. And this promise is made not onely to the *house of David*, that is, to strong Christians; but also to the *inhabitants of Ierusalem*, that is, to weaker Christians. Till such time as we finde this work of the Spirit in us, albeit wee be of the number of Gods elect, we have nothing to do with that Fountaine; no Key can open it, but this alone, of true and hearty greife and remorse for our euill workes, and wayes which are not good. See Cha. 12. 9. for this interpretation.

This point may be further confirmed unto us by plaine reasons drawne from the Scriptures of God: for *Reasons.*

1 First, there can be no sound repentance without this religious and holy mourning. Therefore, when *Ephraim* fell to repentance, God himselfe witnesseth, that he *heard him lamenting* and bewayling his former sinfulnesse, and the folly of his youth. Till then, though there bee many requests for the obtaining of mercy, yet they proceed from the lips, not from the heart; and till such time as men bee wounded in their soules for their sinnes, they and their prayers shall be rejected. For, *The Sacrifices of God are a contrite spirit; a contrite and broken heart he will not despise.* And when *Davids* sinne troubled him, and *was ever before him*, being as painfull unto him, as if his bones had beene broken in peeces, and the splints thereof runne into his flesh; then hee might boldly and comfortably beseech the Lord (as hee did:) *Wash mee throughly from my sinnes, &c.* And againe, *Purge mee with Hsope, and I shall be cleane; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.* For then he might bee assured, that hee came not to God as an hypocrite, with a double heart; but as a true penitent person, with a troubled heart. No sound repentance without mouning for sinne. Psal 51. Verse 8. Verse 2. Verse 7.

2 A second reason to shew the necessity of this inward touch for sinne, is, That without the same it is impossible we should have any Faith: for the promise is made to them that are weary of their corruptions, as a poore prisoner is of his Bolts and Irons; even to them that account sinne to be a bondage, and a captivity unto them. And none have any warrant to come unto Christ, but those that are *weary and heavy laden*. If they feele not their sicknesse, the Lord *Iesus Christ* is not a Physician for their turne: he will not bind up the wounds, 2 No Faith without it. Luke 4. 18. Matth. 11. 28

nor cure the maladies of any, but of those who are touched and pained with the sense and feeling of the same.

Vse 1. For reproofe of those men and women that are audacious and venturous enough to come before God, and to presse into his presence with these or the like requests; Lord be mercifull unto us, Lord wash us from all our sinnes, &c. and yet they themselves never labour to make their hearts cleane, but rather cloake and cover, nay, excuse and defend their faults. Such do but take the holy Name of God in vaine: They make not prayers of Faith, that shall prevaile for them; but prayers of sinne, that shall stand in record against them, being sinfull and abhominable in Gods sight: *They draw neare with their lips, but their hearts are farre from God*; and therefore in vaine they worship him. *Matth. 15.8.*

Hence it commeth to passe, that many offer themselves to receive the Sacrament, the Seale of the eternall Covenant; and come to the Word, to heare the promises of life; and yet depart without all comfort & assurance of Gods favour, because they never came with teares for their transgressions and rebellions against the Lord; nor with that piercing sorrow, which would go as neere them, and be as effectuall in them, as if they shed abundance of teares: because we will not do the lesser which belongeth to us, God will not do the greater which pertaineth to him.

Vse 2. Secondly, seeing God would have all to wash, the best as well as the worst; let us be instructed, if we would have fellowship and communion with God, to search our hearts; to the intent we may finde out the hidden corruptions thereof, and bewaile the same with a sound and earnest lamentation: And then if we do but aske mercie, we shall have it; otherwise not. For, if one of our Children have fallen into some great and grievous fault, we will not forgive him, till he first humble himselfe, as the Prodigall Sonne did: if there be in him no remorse for the offence committed, but he continue proud and stubborne still, the Father should spoyle his childe, if hee should shew him favour; the best course hee can take with him then, is to carry a heavy countenance towards him, and a strait hand over him, that so he may recover him, and

ſave his ſoule. And even in like ſort will God deale with us: where he loveth moſt, he will check and rebuke moſt, till they grow to that reformation which he requireth, and aymeth at in their correction.

Now to the end we may the better get this holy affection of ſorrow into our hearts, we muſt uſe all helpes needfull for this purpoſe. Meanes.

And firſt, becauſe it is a ſupernatural work, we muſt entreat the Lord, according to his promiſe, *Zach.* 12. to put his Spirit into us, and thereby to mollifie our ſtony hearts, as he hath covenanted, *Ezek.* 36. Otherwiſe, we may toyle out our ſelves in vaine; and after a long and tedious ſtrife, be as farre, nay, farther from a tender heart, than we were at the beginning. 1 Prayers for it. 2

Secondly, as we muſt crave aſſiſtance from Heaven, ſo we muſt uſe the meanes that God hath appointed: namely, 2

1 Firſt, to call to minde our many and great offences againſt his Majeſtie; and to lay before our eyes, in as particular manner as we can, our corruptions both originall and actuall, before and ſince our callings: conſidering how grievous they have been; many of them being committed againſt our knowledge, and conſciences: yea, and Covenants made with the Lord, for reſiſting and forſaking of them. Further, we are to recount with our ſelves, of how long continuance they have beene; how offenſive; how pernicious and infectious to others; how many we have poyſoned by them, of whoſe recoverie wee are altogether uncertaine; ſome of them (for ought we know to the contrarie) being already in torments in Hell-fire, for the ſinnes where-into we have drawne them, and others (perchance) likely enough to go the ſame way after them, if the Lord do not in mercie prevent them by his grace, &c. 1 Aggravate our ſinnes.

Theſe, and the like meditations will cauſe our hearts (if they be not paſt ſenſe and feeling) ſomewhat to relent. Thus did *Nehemiah* aggravate their ſinnes that lived in his time: and ſo did *David* his own corruptions, endevouring in many words to make them odious in his owne eyes: acknowledging, that he was conceived in ſinne (which was the fountaine of all) and brought forth in iniquitie: That God required truth in the

Neh. 9. Pſal. 51.

the inward parts, but he had beene hypocriticall and falſe-hearted: That God had taught him wiſdome in the ſecret of his heart, but he had put that out of his conſideration, and caſt it behinde his back, when it ſhould have reſtrained him from all thoſe ill courſes that he tooke. Theſe and many other circumſtances are either plainly expreſſed, or by conſequent neceſſarily implyed in that 51 *Pſalme*; whereby hee labours to ſet out the haynouſneſſe of his offence, that his owne ſoule might abhorre them, and all the world might ſee his utter deteſtation of them.

1

2 Suffer admonition.

Another excellent meanes is, not only with patience to endure, but with earneſtneſſe to entreat the admonitions and reproofes of thoſe which have been and are acquainted with our courſes: for we are ſo full of ſelfe-love, that others may eaſily diſcerne more evill in vs, than we can eſpy in our ſelves: and thoſe, of all other, are the beſt and moſt faithfull friends, that will mercifully and wiſely (though ſharply and roundly) tell us of our faults: as *Nathan* deale with *David*, when his heart had been a long time hardened, by lying in ſinnes unrepented: Which private admonition of his (as wee may obſerve) was a more effectuall meanes for his rowſing out of that dead ſlumber, than any, or all the publike Ordinances of God, as the ſacrifices of the Law, and Sermons of the Prophets, &c. which all that while he had frequented. And ſometime it is found by experience yet ſtill, that a wholſome, and ſound, and wiſe reproofe of a Miniſter of God, or ſome Chriſtian friend in private, throughly ſet on, and effectually applyed, hath done that (through Gods bleſſing) that many holy and excellent Sermons could not effect and bring to paſſe, for the reclayming of divers from the by-paths of iniquity, wherein they had a long time wandred and gone aſtray. Which is not ſpoken, as if this private dealing were to be preferred before Gods publike Ordinances, but that we may have each of them in due eſtimation: that as we ſhould not *deſpiſe Prophecying*, but *ſuffer the words of Exhortation* in the Aſſemblies of the Saints; ſo we ſhould *admoniſh one another*, and be admoniſhed one of another, *daily*, in private, *leſt any be hardened through the deceitfulneſſe of ſinne*.

2 Sam. 12.

Note.

1 Theſſ. 5. 20. Heb. 13. 22.

Heb. 3. 13.

3. In

3 In the next place, when we by our owne ſearching and examination, and by others plaine and faithfull admonition, have found out a great Sea of our corruptions, then let us inwardly and ſeriouſly ponder upon the infinite mercies of the Lord our God, in giving us his deerely beloved Son; and the inconceivable love of the Sonne, in ſubmitting himſelfe to become a ſanſome for us; and that without any entreaty, deſert, or deſire on our part; yea, even then when we were his mortall enemies. This was it that cauſed them in the twelfth of *Zachary*, ſo to mourne and lament becauſe they conſidered what Chriſt had ſuffered in their behalfe. And this ſhould breake and melt our hearts (as it did theirs) that we wounded and peirced our deere Saviour by our tranſgreſſions: for, the *Chaſtiſment of our peace was upon him, & by his ſtripes we were healed.* If he would ſhed his precious blood for us, why ſhould we thinke it much to ſhed a few teares over him? And ſo the meditation of the ſeverall ſufferings of Chriſt, and of Gods gracious promiſes made unto us, in and through him, ſhould cauſe our hearts to be diſſolved into godly ſorrow.

3 Meditate on Gods infinite mercy in Chriſt.

Eſay 53.

4 Fourthly, we muſt as often as fit occaſion is offered, goe unto the houſe of mourning; where we may be put in minde of our wofull eſtate, by reaſon of our wicked nature and ſinfull carriage, in violating the Lords holy Precepts and Commandements. And this is commended as the part of a godly wiſe man by *Salomon* in *Eccleſiaſtes*, where it is ſaid, *The heart of wiſe men is in the houſe of mourning, but the heart of fooles is in the houſe of mirth.* And the reaſon why this is a part of wiſdome, is rendred in the 4 verſe, *It is better to goe to the houſe of mourning, than to the houſe of feaſting, becauſe this is the end of all men, and the living ſhall lay it to his heart.*

4 Make uſe of others croſſes.

Eccleſ. 7 6.

And if others chaſtiſements ſhould affect us, much more ſhould Gods correcting hand upon our ſelves, move us; and when he ſmiteth us, wee ſhould joyne with him, and take his part, and ſmite our owne hearts: and then if Gods ſtrokes on others, or on our ſelves, doe make us mourne for our rebellious behaviour againſt the Lord, happy and bleſſed are wee: for ſo ſaith the Prophet; *Bleſſed is the man, O Lord, whom thou chaſtiſeſt, and teacheſt in thy Law*: And our Saviour alſo;

Of our owne.

Pſal. 94 12.

Bleſſed

Matth 5.4. *Blessed are those that mourne, &c.* Therfore when we find our selves inclined to heavines, in respect of any outward scourge that lyeth on us, or on our friends; let us take hold of the occasion, and turne the course of our griefe another way: Which if we can attaine unto, and make our sinne to be our greatest sorrow, Christ Iesus shall be our greatest joy: And we being mourners of *Sion*, shall be comforted in due season; our iniquities shall be removed as a Cloud, and scattered as a Miste, and we received into everlasting favour.

Vse 3. Thirdly, this is for the singular comfort of Gods Children. What though they have beene like the people of *Sodome*, and of *Gomorrah*, and have lived like Beasts all their life long? Yet this is their hope; that they shall not be cast off: Nay if they can once begin to rince and purge their hearts, though their sinnes have beene never so horrible, and odious, and abominable, they may be assured of the free and full pardon of them all. Neither need they make any doubt at all hereof: for if such kinde of sinners might not attaine to this, it were in vaine for the Lord to exhort them to repentance. But we see here, that though these *Iewes* had received many Blessings, heard many Instructions and Threatnings out of the Word, and felt many Corrections from Gods owne hand, and nothing would drive them from their accustomed course of Rebellion: Yet notwithstanding all this, if now at last they would grieve their hearts in good earnest, and not passe over the matter with some sleight mourning (for so farre wicked *Saul* went, when *Dauid* had told him of his fault, in pursuing him that was innocent) but strive for a soaking and working sorrow: If, I say, they would labour for this, the Lord offers them mercie; so that they should forthwith be disburthened of the guilt, and freed from the punishment of all their former wickednesse. For when sinne is once cast out of the heart, God hath no quarrell against the partie: and it can never lurke there long, except it be fed with excuse and allowance. It never stickes so close, nor cleaves so fast, but godly sorrow will make a separation betwixt it and the soule, and crush the very head thereof. That giveth life and root unto it, and makes it grow and

Note. bring forth abundance of fruit; when we love it, and can say some-

ſomewhat for it: But if we do not nouriſh it in our ſoules, but baniſh it thence, we ſhal be accepted, whatſoever our life hath formerly beene: for, as God will never ſprinkle the Bloud of his owne Sonne upon a carnall, and proud, and prophane heart; ſo he will never deny to give the Merits of his Sonne unto an heavy, and ſorrowfull, and contrite ſpirit.

[*Take away the evill of your workes from before mine eyes.*] As if he ſhould have ſaid: Hitherto you have but diſſembled in the duties performed by you: Which hollowneſſe of yours, though men could not ſo well ſee and diſcerne, yet the Lords eyes have beene and are ſtill caſt upon your doubling & halting, and falſe dealing. And therefore, if you would have him to looke favourably upon you, take away from his ſight that which cauſeth him to frowne upon you; not onely your evill works (for ſo hypocrites may do) but the evill of your good works. For here (we muſt underſtand) God did not ayme at the ſubverſion and overthrow of the former duties of Religion, but wiſheth them to do the ſame works of Pietie ſtill, but in a better ſort then they were wont to do them. Whence this Doctrine offereth it ſelfe for our learning: that,

Doct. 2. Good things muſt be done in a good manner.

A Chriſtian muſt not onely do good things, but muſt do them in a good manner: otherwiſe, God may and will reject the works, and confound the doers of them.

This people here had many outward Obſervations, as doth appeare from *Verſe* 12, to the 16. Yet becauſe their ſervices were not performed in Faith and Love, God did utterly abhorre and deteſt them. They would keepe the Sabbaths, and frequent the ſolemne Aſſemblies, but they would learne nothing at all: Though their Bodies were there, their Hearts were not there; but either about their Buſineſſe in the Family, or their Affaires and dealings in the World; or thinking how to revenge ſuch or ſuch an Injurie: how to relieve themſelves in ſuch or ſuch a neceſſitie, or the like; or, perchance, worſe matters. They would make long Prayers, but their Hearts were full of wrath, and their minds full of doubting: and ſo in other exerciſes of Religion, ſtill they mingled their owne corruption, inſomuch that God could have no liking of them. Such were the Scribes & Phariſes alſo, who uſed to preach, to

give

give much almes; to pray, and fast often; and had a very smooth outside: for so much Christ grants them, that they were painted Sepulchers, faire to behold and looke upon; and Graves so covered over with Greensward, that one might walk over them againe and againe, and yet never perceive any rotten bones therein. Notwithstanding all this, the vengeance of God is denounced against none more often and earnestly by our Saviour, than against that kinde of people; as appeareth plainely in the Gospell. And why? becaufe they tooke not away the evill of their works: for which cause the Lord Iesus tels them, *Ye are they which justifie your selve before men, but God knowes your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men, is abhominable in the sight of God.*

Matth 23.

Luke 16.15.

And the like the Prophet *Isaiah* layeth unto the Iewes charge elsewhere, saying, *This people come neere unto me with their mouth, & honor me with their lips, but have removed their heart farre from me.* He blameth them not, for that they came not to Church, or that they refused to make an outward semblance and shew of worshiping him either in word or deed (for herein they were very forward) but for that they brought a lame Sacrifice, or rather a dead carkasse; presenting before God the outward man, but not caring to bring before him the inward man, which hee cheifly regardeth and looketh after: and without which the other is of no reckoning with him, but is esteemed to be a vaine and sinfull worship.

Isay 29. 13.

And the same detestation of such hypocriticall serving of him, the Lord sheweth in another place of this Prophecy; where first he declareth what kind of worshipers hee requireth and delighteth in; *To him will I looke* (saith he) *even to him that is poore, & of a contrite spirit, & trembleth at my words.* Thus ought all to bee disposed and affected, that expect any favour from the Lord; that because hee is so holy, and mighty, and glorious, they must come with feare and trembling, through a sight and feeling of their owne baseneſſe and unworthineſſe: which if they strive to doe, the Lord promiseth, that hee will looke upon them with a mercifull and gracious eye. Then in the next verse, he setteth down what account he maketh of ceremonious worshipers, that contented themselves

Isay 66.2, 3.

ſelves with offering Oblations of Bullockes, and Sheepe, &c. thinking, that God was beholding to them for the ſame: they trembled not at the word, neither were ſorrowfull, nor heavy hearted for their ſinnes: yet becauſe they were at coſt & charges, to ſerve God in Sacrifices and Incenſe, they thought themſelves as good as the beſt. But the Lord ſheweth there, that he condemneth and abhorreth them and their Oblations, ſaying, *He that offereth a Sacrifice*, and doth not offer himſelfe, it is all one as if he were a murtherer (for to that effect are the words) *He that killeth a Bullock, is as if he ſlew a man: & he that ſacrificeth a Sheep, as if he cut off a Dogs necke*, which was then an uncleane Beaſt, & rejected (amongſt others) by the Leviticall Law) *He that offereth an Oblation, as if he offered Swines bloud*: (which was likewiſe forbidden at that time, and counted an abhomination to be offered to the Lord.) And as for their incenſe and bowing downe in Gods houſe, he ſheweth, that it is as if they bowed to an Idoll, and bleſſed it; it was as hatefull and lothſome in Gods eyes, as the moſt vile and monſtrous Idolatry that was. For he required of them, in thoſe outward Oblations, that they ſhould have ſpirituall affections; without which, the other were ſo farre from pleaſing him, that they grieuouſly provoked him. Hee that did bring a Beaſt to be killed, was thereby to profeſſe before the Lord, that he deſerved for his tranſgreſſions to be killed himſelfe. Now, when he could ſtand by, and ſee the Beaſt ſlain, with a bold face and a ſenſeleſſe heart, not trembling at the conſideration of his owne wretched deſerts, the Lord profeſſeth, that he wil never looke with a pittifull eye upon ſuch an one, but eſteeme him as a notorious malefactor, and puniſh him accordingly. And, that he was of power ſo to doe, he maketh it evident in that place by this, That his hand had formed the Heavens, and faſhioned all the wonderfull workes that are on the Earth: and they were not ſo wittie to deceive the Lord, as he was wiſe and mighty, both to hunt them out, and to execute ſtrange and fearefull judgements upon them.

Note.

Ver. 1, 2.

Beſides theſe places, there are Reaſons to confirme this Doctrine: for,

1 Firſt, God doth as ſtrictly command the manner of our *Reaſon.*

obedience, as the matter of it; and lookes as much that it should be well performed, as that it be performed. Hee in-
2 Tim. 2.15. joynes the Minister not only to preach true & sound doctrin, but to divide the word aright, & to apply it wisely and fitly, giving every one their portion in due season. He commandeth the people, not only to come to the Sermon, (for so the wickedest may doe) but to come with a good and honest heart. He biddeth us not onely to pray, but to *pray in the holy Ghost*, (as *Iude* speaketh) and to pray fervently, as *Iames* saith, *The prayer*
Iames 5.16. *of the righteous availeth much, if it be fervent; and to lift up*
1 Tim. 2.8. *pure hands in prayer, without wrath or doubting*. And so for all other duties, he would have us to be carefull how we doe them, as well as that we do them.

2 Secondly, God is a *Spirit*, and therfore *will be worshipped*, not in outward ceremonie alone, but in *spirit and truth*: give
Iohn 4.v.24. him the best words that may be, if we doe not give him our hearts, all is nothing worth.

Iudas dealt best with Christ, of all the Disciples, in appearance: for when all shrunke from him, he stuck to him, came and bowed himselfe before him, saluted and kissed him. Who would not say now (had he not been privy to *Iudas* his heart) that he was the true and faithfull friend above all the rest, that would shew himselfe thus friendly in the time of adversitie? Yet the Swords and Staves of those that apprehended Christ, were not so odious unto him, as was *Iudas* his kisse that betrayed him, because he had an ill and corrupt minde, and a trecherous and false heart in that which he did. And such are the services of all hypocrites, even *Iudas* his kisses; and therefore they shall be requited with *Iudas* his reward, except they reforme their hearts, and amend their workes.

Vse 1. This makes for the just reproofe, not onely of grosse sinners, and of hollow-hearted dissemblers, but even of Gods owne servants: For, none can say he is altogether innocent in this point, but at one time or other, in one dutie or other, he hath failed more or lesse; if not in the matter, yet in the manner of performing the same. This will be more evidently seene in the particulars; and therfore my purpose is to speake of foure kindes of workes: namely,

Of

Of the workes { 1 Of Religion. 2 Of Love and Mercy. 3 Of our ordinarie Callings. 4 Of Recreation.

And first, to give instance in the exercises of Religion; who can cleare himselfe therein? For, if men come unto Sermons, and offer unto the Lord their bodily presence, doe not the most think they have acquitted themselves well? Albeit in the meane while they be altogether negligent in making preparation for this worke, by searching their soules, to cast out the Leaven of corruption, which wil hinder the powerfull operation of the Word; & by getting that sight of their wants, that might cause them to come with an eager appetite unto Gods House for comfort and supply. They seldome, or at least very coldly, pray unto the Lord to give them an understanding mind, and a teachable heart, to profit by the means: but for the most part, thrust in themselves rudely with a proud & unprepared heart, and with unruly and distempered affections, that when they stand in Gods holy presence, are wandring from the duties in hand, & running after their covetousnes, or after their delights; and so if the Word come in at the one eare, it flyes out as fast at the other. And they doe not mingle it with Faith as they should doe, but with their owne corruptions, which hinder the effectuall working of it; and so seales up unto many their own just condemnations, in stead of being an instrument of God for their edification and saluation. And as for Gods own children; instead of those excellent graces that might be thereby wrought in them, it oftentimes hardens their hearts, and fits them for sharpe correction, by reason of their negligence and carelesnesse in dealing with it.

Works of Religion.

Evils of hearing.

Heb. 4.

So for Prayer; whereas they should lift up pure hands, without wrath & without doubting; many never care what manner of Sacrifice they offer unto the Lord; but are full of passion, which distracts them; & full of unbeliefe, which excludes them from having interest in Gods blessings; and so their prayers tumble downe againe upon their heads, and bring upon them judgements in stead of mercies. They may truely say, that they have sought for helpe often, and have had no hea-

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hearing; but it is long of themselves: for the Sea is not more full of water, than God is full of mercy to all that *call upon him in truth*: and if they could put away their unbeliefe and hypocrisie, and other evils that are mixed with their suits and supplications, they should finde that none is so kinde a Father, as God is; and they should not be so ready to aske, but he would be more ready to give, if so be they did come in faith, and aske aright, as God requireth. The like may be said for the Sacrament of the Lords Supper: Divers there are that partake of it as often as their neighbours doe, but they are so farre from receiving benefit and comfort there-from, that it proves hurtfull and uncomfortable unto them: and why? becauſe they put not away the evill of this worke.

Evils to be removed by Communicants.

But what are thoſe evils (may ſome demand?) They are divers:

1 Ignorance.

One common evill is groſſe and palpable Ignorance; that men come, not diſcerning the Lords Body and Bloud; that is, not being able to put a difference betweene the bleſſed Elements, and common Bread and Wine; and ſo comming unto it, no otherwiſe than to their ordinarie food: not conceiving, much leſſe well conſidering, what they are to receive from God, what from man; what examination is to be uſed, that they may be worthy receivers of it; what judgements are to be feared, if they be unworthy receivers: and ſo they feele thoſe judgements, before they feare them.

2 Vnbeliefe.

2 A ſecond evill to be removed from this worke, is Vnbeliefe; which hinders us, that we cannot find the inward vertue of thoſe holy Myſteries. For when we draw neere to the Lords Table, we ſhould make reckoning of greater benefits than all the Kings and Kingdomes of the Earth can afford us: for there, God the Father is the Feaſt-maker; he giveth us for our entertainement, the Body and Bloud of his own Sonne, to feed upon: he offereth us, and would exhibite unto us (if wee had faith to apprehend it) Chriſt his perfect righteouſneſſe, and increaſe of our true holineſſe; and intitleth us to all comforts in this life, and to the crown of glory in the life to come. This, many know; but they want faith, to make application of it to themſelves: And thence it commeth to paſſe, that their

Soules are ſo barren of grace, notwithſtanding their often communicating at the Lords Table.

The Woman in the Goſpell that was troubled with a bloudy iſſue, ſaid in her heart before ſhe came to Chriſt, if I may but touch the hem of his garment only, I ſhall be made whole, and according to her Faith, it was unto her: For that touch healed both her Soule and Body: yet ſhe had no ſpeciall commandement to come, nor promiſe of good ſucceſſe if ſhe did come, nor experience of any in her caſe that had ſped well before her: If ſhe were thus confident, having had ſo few means to confirme her, what ſtrength of faith ſhould we come withall, and what a ſtedfaſt expectation of mercy ſhould wee have ſetled in our hearts, when we come to Chriſt Ieſus in this his Ordinance? Seeing that we have both a Commandement and a promiſe, and the examples before our eyes of ſuch as have found unſpeakable good by this holy Sacrament: and there is more reaſon why our Saviour ſhould pitty us, then why he ſhould pitty that woman: for we have a more dangerous iſſue of ſin in our ſoules, than ſhee had of bloud in her body; and many of us have bin longer troubled with it, than ſhee was with hers: and hee came rather to heale the ſickneſſe of the ſoule, than to cure the maladies of the body. And beſides all the former, he ſhall have more glory by ſaving us from ſinne, then by healing her from a bodily infirmity: and the taking, and eating of the bleſſed Sacrament of the eternall Covenant, is much more effectuall to draw vertue from Chriſt, than the bare touching of his Garment was: and hee is neerer unto us now in his gracious preſence, than he was unto her then, in his bodily preſence,

Note. Mat. 9. 21.

This we ſhould beleeve and reſt upon: and if we doe not, we offer unto the Lord the greater injury: for hee purpoſeth to beſtow that upon us in truth, which hee makes offer of in ſhew: even to give us a full communion with the righteouſneſſe of the ſecond *Adam*, as we had with the corruption of the firſt *Adam*. Even as the branches doe partake of the ſap of the Vine: and the members of the body, have life and motion derived unto them from the head: ſo ſhall we receive

grace and life from Iesus Christ, in, and by his holy meanes, so often as we doe thankfully use them.

3 Vncharitablenesse.

3 A third evill that must be put away, when we are to be partakers of the Lords Supper, is uncharitablenesse, and unmercifulnesse: For this is a Feast of Love, where wee are to receive further assurance of Gods love to us, and an increase of our love to God & Men. And how can we look for mercy if we shew no mercy? Or how can we expect from the Lord a generall acquittance for all our debts and trespasses, when we will not passe by small matters of offence in our Brethren? Therefore as we would finde any favor in heaven, let us put away from us that unloving disposition that is naturally ingrafted in every mans heart; and strive to get in our Soules, and to expresse in our lives, a true love and Christian affection. And to the end we may shew indeed that we have this excellent vertue in us, let us practise these two rules:

2 Rules of Charity. Math. 18. 35.

1 First, if thou hast a grudge against any, labour from thy heart to forgive, and for ever to forget, whatsoever injurie or indignity hath beene offered unto thee.

Note.

2 Secondly, if thou thy selfe hast done wrong to any other, seeke to undoe it againe. Many when they have bin injurious unto their neighbours, and revenged themselves upon them, will be ready to plead for themselves, and say, I am satisfied, I hope, I need not seeke reconciliation with him, for I beare him no malice. But have not you given him cause of griefe? Have not you spoken words that sticke in his stomacke, and wound his heart? If you have, goe and reconcile your selfe unto your Brother; else your Sacrifice cannot be accepted: Though you have nothing against him, yet if he have somewhat against you, the rule of love requireth that you should seeke peace with him, if he will not seeke it of you.

Math. 5. 23.

Singing of Psalmes.

The like may be said of singing of *Psalmes*, men will use it for fashion sake, because they would not seeme to reject any religious Service: But if they would have any edification or consolation thereby, they must sing with the heart, as well as with the voyce: and make melody inwardly to the Lord, as well as outwardly before men.

Eph. 5. 19. Col. 3. 18.

And

And as theſe and the like corruptions are to be ſeparated from the works of piety towards God: So,

Secondly, There are other evils to be removed from our works of mercy, and of love towards men. As in the manner of Almes: If we thinke to merit thereby, as Papiſts doe; or ſeeke vain-glory thereby, as Phariſes doe, we put not away the evill of that worke, and therefore God will reject the worke it ſelfe. 2 Workes of Mercy.

So for admonition and reproofe, they are very neceſſary to be given: yet if men doe theſe duties in wrath and diſtemper, they ſhall doe more hurt by their bitterneſſe, and paſſion, than they can poſſibly doe good by their admonition. Admonition.

Thirdly, concerning the workes of our ordinary callings, we muſt caſt off theſe evils that uſually cleave unto them, as, 3 Works of our Callings.

Firſt, for Maſters; It is their duty to deale with their Servants by admoniſhing them, and by reproving them; yea and if need be, by correcting them alſo: which is as neceſſary for them as their meat and drinke: but then they muſt beware of wrath and outrage; of bitterneſſe and cruelty, and do as the Lord doth here: He telleth the *Iewes*, that they were worſe than bruit beaſts, and nothing inferior to the *Sodomites* in ſins and impiety: But how; doth he leave them here? Oh no, he deales mercifully with them, and ſhewes them how they may amend all, for otherwiſe they would have fretted, or deſpaired. So muſt maſters deale; not miniſter a ſharpe and biting reproof, and then fling away from their Servants in a paſſion, for that were not to deale as a Surgeon that comes to heale; but as a robber, or a theefe that comes to kill: that give a gaſh, or a wound, and ſo away: Nay, we muſt ſhew them their ſickneſſe: ſo we muſt give them a medicine: tell them where they goe out of the way, and direct them into the right way: yea, and beſeech the Lord alſo, of his owne mercy and goodneſſe, to guide and order them better hereafter; but if we come in fury and paſſion, not to edifie them, but to eaſe our ſelves on them, they will hate the reprover, and deſpiſe the reproofe, but never leave the fault reproved. And thence it is that there are ſo many complaints; never man nor wo- I The Maſters duty. I Reproving. Note.

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So for admonition and reproofe, they are very neceſſary to be given: yet if men doe theſe duties in wrath and diſtemper, they ſhall doe more hurt by their bitterneſſe, and paſſion, than they can poſſibly doe good by their admonition. Admonition.

Thirdly, concerning the workes of our ordinary callings, we muſt caſt off theſe evils that uſually cleave unto them, as, 3 Works of our Callings.

Firſt, for Maſters; It is their duty to deale with their Servants by admoniſhing them, and by reproving them; yea and if need be, by correcting them alſo: which is as neceſſary for them as their meat and drinke: but then they muſt beware of wrath and outrage; of bitterneſſe and cruelty, and do as the Lord doth here: He telleth the *Iewes*, that they were worſe than bruit beaſts, and nothing inferior to the *Sodomites* in ſins and impiety: But how; doth he leave them here? Oh no, he deales mercifully with them, and ſhewes them how they may amend all, for otherwiſe they would have fretted, or deſpaired. So muſt maſters deale; not miniſter a ſharpe and biting reproof, and then fling away from their Servants in a paſſion, for that were not to deale as a Surgeon that comes to heale; but as a robber, or a theefe that comes to kill: that give a gaſh, or a wound, and ſo away: Nay, we muſt ſhew them their ſickneſſe: ſo we muſt give them a medicine: tell them where they goe out of the way, and direct them into the right way: yea, and beſeech the Lord alſo, of his owne mercy and goodneſſe, to guide and order them better hereafter; but if we come in fury and paſſion, not to edifie them, but to eaſe our ſelves on them, they will hate the reprover, and deſpiſe the reproofe, but never leave the fault reproved. And thence it is that there are ſo many complaints; never man not wor- I The Maſters duty. I Reproving. Note.

man was troubled with ſuch Children, or ſuch Servants: Why, what is the matter? Oh we haue reproued them, and told them of their faults ſo often, and ſo earneſtly, and yet there is no reformation nor amendment of any thing: But looke backe to your ſelfe now, and perhaps the greateſt blame will lye upon you.

Note. You are ſtill exhorting, and ſtill crying out againſt them for their miſdemeanor, but how? Is it not done in a paſſion to eaſe your ſelfe, and not in compaſſion to helpe them? You haue given them diuers bitter and cutting ſpeeches, but how many feruent prayers haue you made for them in ſecret? You haue often bin grieued at them, and rebuked them, & do ſtill chide them very ſharply for fayling in your worke, but how many teares haue you ſhed for their fayling in Gods Seruice, and grieuous offences againſt his holy Majeſty? If you cannot bee thus ſpiritually affected, nor afford them your prayers, as well as your rebukes, you may ſpare a labour for any good that is likely to come of all that you doe.

Therefore let Maſters of Families, and Parents (likewiſe husbands when they are to deale this way with their wiues) be carefull to doe this duty in wiſedome and moderation, in loue and tender affection to the Soules of the parties offending. If the faults be priuate, let the admonition be priuate: If they be great, bring ſtrong arguments to conuince the offender, and to beat downe his ſin: but ſpare tart, and bitter, and reuiling ſpeeches, that will rather exaſperate, than worke any cure upon them that are faulty and blame-worthy.

Labour. So for labouring in our vocations. It is good to riſe early, and to doe the duties belonging unto us, with all diligence, and faithfulneſſe, but then we muſt take heed that we labour

Note. not for couetouſneſſe, nor in deſire of filthy lucre, but in conſcience and obedience to God: For otherwiſe, we ſhall bee froward and diſtempered when things go croſſe with us: and luſt after the world, and dote upon the vanities of the world, when things goe well with us. If we ſerue the world, or our ſelues in the paines that we take, we ſhall be vexed and diſquieted with continuall diſcontentments; and ever turmoyled

and

and tossed with some inordinate affection or other; if we can get advantage by doing of wrong, wee shall not much sticke at it: and if a commodity lye in our way, wee will not bee afraid to seeke our owne gaine, though it be to our neighbors great losse. Whereas if we aymed at Gods glory in our dealings and affaires of this life, we would rather suffer wrong, than doe wrong: and helpe others, than hurt them, knowing that when we doe best, we alwaies speed best.

And as Masters must herein looke to themselves: so must servants in their places; they must beware of eye-service: for many there are, who when their Masters eye is cast upon the, will bestir them very busily, and do much: but when his eye is off them, and he absent from them, they will either do nothing at al, or very little in comparison of that they might & ought to do. Such must remember that they should serve the Lord Christ in their places, whose fiery eyes are still upon them, to reward them if they be industrious and painefull, and to punish them, if they be careless, idle, and wastfull.

I Servants duty.

Fourthly and lastly, for our recreations, which being lawfull and warrantable in themselves, yet seeing they are mingled with many horrible corruptions by the users, or rather by the abusers of them, we must be likewise carefull to put away the evils of them: As,

4 Recreations;

First, the evill end that is propounded by those that are much addicted thereunto: And what is that? For the most part, not to refresh themselves, but to gleane money from their companions, unto which they have no right at all, eyther by Gods Law, or by Mans: neither shall they ever bee able to answer the losing or getting of such money before Gods Iudgement-Seat. Yet that is the Divels sawce whereby their recreations are usually sweetned, which else would not be so wel pleasing unto their fleshly taste: which is a sufficient argument to confirme the unlawfulnesse of such exercises, to those that so use them, because that this mixture, with all or most of their games and sports, is that which the worst doe most delight in, and without it, count their recreation but an idle thing, nay, a meere vexation and torture.

Corruptions thereof. The evill end of them.

Note.

2 Misspending of Time.

A second mischiefe that usually accompanieth such exercises, is misspending of too much time in their vaine delights: which may well be called vaine, when they either wholly, or for the most part hinder men from Gods service, and from the works of their callings, and make them altogether vaine, and idle, and unprofitable burdens of the Earth. Satan that old Serpent (whom they serve that are thus in bondage to their fond and wretched lusts) hath many cunning wiles and crafty fetches, both to allure them into his snares, and to hold them fast when he hath intangled them: and this is one amongst the rest, that when one gets and feeles it comming, he stirreth up in him such a lust after gold and silver, or whatsoever they play for, that they cannot make an end in any time. And if any one lose, he perswades him (though indeed there needs not any great adoe to perswade them, their owne corruptions carrying too great a sway over them in this respect) to play one game more, to trie if he can recover that which he hath lost, and not to let the winners give over with such dammage unto him, and advantage unto themselves: and so let slippe many a precious houre, wherein, if they were well bused, they might get more good unto their Soules, than all the World is worth.

Note.

And as in gaming, so in other pastimes (as they call them) they are so excessive in respect of time, that instead of the right end of them (which is to quicken and revive the Spirits, and to fit men for matters of greater importance) they pervert them to a quite contrary end, and make them meanes to weary and tire out themselves: so that they are for that day, utterly disabled for any worke of Religion, or of their callings.

Yet it is strange to heare how those that carry the name and profession of Christianity, will shift off every wholsome admonition and rebuke that is brought against them, with this; What, will you not allow us recreation? But it might be demanded of many of them, to their shame, what is your vocation, that talke so much of recreation? what sore labour have you undertaken so to weary you, that you should stand in need of so much refreshing? In truth if things were well

examined

examined, we ſhould finde, that ſuch make their ſports to be their vocation (if they have any at all) not their recreation. For they do nothing elſe, or very little elſe, but eat, and drinke, and ſleep, and play, and ſo conſume the dayes, and ſpend the greateſt part of their life like Epicures, that dreame of no other happineſſe, but of following their delights, and giving themſelves over to beaſtly voluptuouſneſſe, and ſenſuality. And whereas recreation ſhould be uſed onely as Phyſicke, they make it their ordinary dyet. If we ſhould heare a man alwaies inquiring after skilfull Phyſitians, and calling for nothing elſe but Phyſicke, Phyſicke; we would preſently conclude, certainly this man hath a very ſickly body: and what elſe can we think of thoſe men that are ſtill following after vain delights, and in whoſe mouthes there is nothing ſo uſuall as recreation, recreation; what elſe (I ſay) can we thinke of them, but this, ſurely theſe men have very ſickly Soules? There is very little inward joy and ſpirituall contentment in that heart, where ſo much is ſought for, from theſe externall things. *Note.*

A third evil in recreations is, inward fretting, and outward chafing; eſpecially when they breathe out monſtrous oaths, & fearfull blaſphemies againſt the God of Heaven; and horrible imprecations, & curſed ſpeeches againſt his Creatures, which are too too uſual in their carding, and dicing, &c. For there are none more outragious people, than thoſe that are carried away with the ſtreame of thoſe unruly luſts. And whereas many of them will confeſſe, that theſe things are amiſſe, and ſhould be mended, but they know not how to do it: let ſuch know, that how lawfull ſoever ſuch recreations are unto other, it is ſure they are unlawfull to them. For how can they either comfortably pray for a bleſſing upon that they go about, before they ſet forth in the morning, when they ruſh on ſuch occaſions (unto them at leaſt) of dangerous falling, & fearfull provoking of the Lord? or how can they return at night, to render thanks and to looke their Father in the face with any comfort, when they have been all the whole day ſo buſily imploied in the ſervice of the Divel, and of their owne ſinfull fleſh? what uſe then can they have of that, which they can neither crave a bleſſing 3 Fretting, chafing, and blaſpheming. *Note.*

blessing on, before they undertake it, nor give thanks for when they have finished it: seeing that we are commanded, *Whatsoever we do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Iesus, giving thanks unto God the Father through him.* If such men therefore cannot remove the evils of this worke, it were farre better for them to remove the work it selfe: (which they may well do, and yet have many other honest & Christian refreshings, sufficient for their comfort & contentment) rather than so to misspend their money, and time, and strength, and to cast away their owne Soules in the pursuit of such base trifles, and alluring vanities, that do so bewitch the common sort of men.

Col. 3. 17.

Note.

Thus we have seene (as particularly as the time would permit) what drosse of corruption is to be purged away from the several actions and duties, wherin upon severall occasions, and according to our seuerall callings, we are to be busied and imployed. These evils therefore we must with all conscionable and faithfull endeavour seeke to remove, and that from before Gods eyes. For, whereas many may have this conceit, No man can charge me, I will never accuse my selfe, and my companions will certainly conceale and keepe all to themselves, and therefore I need not feare the disclosing of my actions and dealings: this will not serve their turnes: for though men cannot touch them, yet there is an All-seeing God, that alwayes looketh upon them: and where his eye is displeased, his hand will surely be avenged. And therefore if we would have any blessing from any of Gods ordinances, let us *wash our hands in innocency when we compasse his Altar* (as the Prophet speaketh) and cleanse our inward parts from that, that God may dislike, as well as our outward behaviour from that which men may disallow of.

From before mine eyes,

Psal. 26. 6.

Doct. 3. *Cease to do evill*] From these words this Doctrine might be raised: That,

It is not sufficient in a passion to be sorrowful for sinne, and hourely to confesse and acknowledge it, but these duties must be so sincerely & effectually performed, that there be a ceasing from evil afterwards. But this point hath been handled in the former Sermon, *Doct.* 3. where the Reader may finde the same prosecuted at large.

THE

THE THIRD SERMON.

ISAIAH 1. 17,18,19.

17 *Learne to do well, ſeeke judgement, relieve the oppreſſed, judge the fatherleſſe, and defend the widow.*

18 *Come now, and let us reaſon together, ſaith the Lord: though your ſinnes were as crimſon, they ſhall be made as white as ſnow: though they were red like ſcarlet, they ſhall be as wooll.*

19 *If ye conſent to obey, ye ſhall eat the good things of the Land*

LEarne to do well.] Having ſhewed them what they muſt not do; now he proceedeth to declare what they muſt doe, and biddeth them do well: And becauſe there was in them no fitneſſe hereunto, therefore he wiſheth them to [*Learne*] *to doe well.* Whence the *Doctrine* is, that,

All godly and penitent perſons, while they live in this world, muſt alwayes be learning to do well: and apply their mindes to know what duties of Religion and of Righteouſneſſe they ought to performe, and in what manner they muſt be performed. *Doct. 9.* All muſt be Chriſt his Schollers.

So ſaith our Saviour, *Take my yoke upon you, and learne of me, &c. For I am meeke, and lowly in heart, and ye ſhall find reſt unto, &c.* Matt. 11.29. As if he ſhould have ſaid: If any take up my yoke, and continue not to be a learner from my Word, how to beare the ſame, either he himſelfe will be weary of it, or others will perſwade him to take up the Divels yoke, or mens yoke: (which is much at one: for they are both on one ſide) therefore learne of me (ſaith Chriſt.) And that they might the ſooner be drawne thereunto, he removes the impediments that might diſcourage them. For they might [illegible]

Objection. Oh I am so full of corruption, and my nature is so overgrowne, and over-run with sinne and iniquity, that if I should come unto Christ Iesus, who is perfectly holy and righteous, he could not but be angry with me, and sharply chide and rebuke me.

Answer. Nay, saith Christ, you need not feare that, *for I am meeke*, and therefore not so prone and ready to fall out with men that are weary of their sinnes, as willing to helpe and heale them.

Objection. Another might say: But alas, I am so blockish and ignorant that if I should come to be instructed, Christ Iesus would despise me.

Answer. For the answering of that objection, he saith, that *he is lowly in heart*: and the property of those that are lowly, is, never to contemne any for their defects and imperfections; but rather to pitty and helpe them: and therefore they may boldly have recourse unto such a Teacher as our Saviour is, and expect to be still further informed by him in all the wayes of godlinesse and righteousnesse.

Mat. 10 42. Ioh. 15. 8. Psal. 36 3. 1 Cor. 13 9. 1 Cor. 8. 2. Psal. 19. 12. Psal. 119. 33.

In this regard Christians are called Christs Disciples, which signifieth nothing else, but to be Christ his Schollers. And it is given as a note and brand of a forlorne and desperate wicked person, *that he hath left off to understand to do good.* And on the contrary it is set down as an evident signe of a marvellous sanctified and holy man, to acknowledge still that he *knoweth but in part: that he knoweth nothing as he ought to do*: and to cry out, *Who knoweth the errours of his life? Cleanse me from my secret sinnes. Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy Statutes, and I will keepe it unto the end*: with many the like requests. And it must needs be so; that they that are truly converted, and in any good measure acquainted with their owne hearts, should be thus instant to be still further directed and taught.

Reasons.

I The Minde is blinde, the Heart deceitfull.

First, because they perceive the darkenesse that doth naturally over-spread their mindes; and that those which have most light, have very little in comparison of that they should have, and might have had, if they had constantly and conscionably imployed themselves in the use of the meanes which they have injoyed. They know well enough how ready their fleshly hearts are to deceive them, unlesse they go often to

God

God by fervent prayer, and to his Servants to be directed in the right path wherein they ſhould walke. And this makes them ſo deſirous of ſound underſtanding. They wiſely conſider, that the drift and whole ſcope of all their actions, ſhould be to pleaſe the Lord, and therfore they would moſt willingly be informed what his good will and pleaſure is in every thing.

Secondly, he hath commanded them to *grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.* There is no further growth in Faith, or in any other Grace, than there is in Knowledge. A man may know more than he believeth, but he can never beleeve more than he knoweth. True knowledge is as it were the chiefe wheele in a Clock, that draweth all the reſt of Gods graces after it: and if that ſtand ſtill, all the reſt muſt needs ſtand ſtill with it. And therefore it was, that *David* prayed ſo often, and ſo earneſtly, *Teach me thy Statutes: open mine eyes that I may ſee the wonders of thy Law, &c.* Why (might ſome ſay) was not the Prophet well taught when he was a teacher of others, and one of the holy men of God, whom the Spirit uſed as an inſtrument to pen a great part of the Scripture? Yes ſurely, few were better inſtructed than he was: yet he found ſuch great blindneſſe of minde, and deceitfulneſſe of heart ſtill, when he came to matters of practiſe, that he never ceaſed crying for more underſtanding of heavenly things. As alſo the wiſe-man exhorteth, *to call for knowledge, to ſeeke her as Silver, and to ſearch for her as for Treaſures.* That as covetous men never thinke they have gold and ſilver enough: So Chriſtians muſt never thinke they have heavenly Wiſedome enough, but ſtill covet more and more *after Spirituall things.*

2 Pet. 3. 18.

Pſal 119.

Prov. 2. 3, 4.

1 Cor 14. 1.

Vſe 1. 1 Here are thoſe ſharply to be reproved, and much to be condemned, who are too too well conceited of themſelves, and of their owne wits: that will brag and boaſt, that they are not ſo ſimple, but they know well enough how to ſerve God, and to do the duties that pertaine to them in their Families: they have not beene ſo many yeares married, nor lived ſo long in the World, but they know ſufficiently without teaching, what belongeth to the dutie of an Husband, of a Father, of a Maſter,

Master, and all other things that a Christian man should know. These fooliſh men in ſaying thus, do little conſider what they ſpeake againſt themſelves, and how farre they diſcover their owne nakedneſſe: hereby they make it apparant, that they have in them no Chriſtianity at all: for, what are they wiſer than all the Prophets and righteous men that lived in ancient times? They ſaw and acknowledged their great want of the underſtanding of holy things: and that not for modeſties ſake, but they and others rued it, and felt the ſmart of their defects that way. How foulely was *Eli* over-taken through ignorance, in cenſuring and condemning good *Hannah* for drunkenneſſe, when ſhe was powring out her Soule before the Lord, becauſe ſhe moved her lips onely, and uttered no words in his hearing, but ſpake in her heart unto God? And the like might be ſaid of many indiſcreet ſpeeches and actions of the Diſciples of Chriſt before the reſurrection, and till they had received the Spirit of underſtanding in a more plentifull meaſure.

Note.

2. Sam. 1. 11. 13, 14.

Want of wiſedome.

And to come more particularly to our ſelves: who hath that wiſedome to make ſo good uſe as he ſhould of proſperity or adverſity? To profit by Gods hand in mercy, or in judgement, upon our ſelves or others? Nay, who hath attained to that ſoundneſſe of judgement, as to underſtand the Scripture ſo well as he ſhould, when he readeth them, or heareth them read by others? Or to make a right uſe of them in applying them to his owne Soule, when they are plainly and ſoundly preached, and expounded unto him? He that thinketh that he knoweth any thing fully and perfectly in theſe matters, let him be aſſured, that he knoweth nothing as yet as he ought to know: and as for him *that is wiſe in his owne conceit, there is more hope of a foole, than of him.* For a naturall Foole, though he be not capable of inſtruction and advice, yet by the whip may be kept within ſome compaſſe: but nothing will be available with a conceited Foole; *Though thou ſhouldeſt bray him in a mortar* (as the wiſe man ſpeaketh) *among wheat brayed with a peſtle, yet will not his fooliſhneſſe depart from him*: you may ſooner drive his Soule out of his Body, than you can drive folly out of his Soule.

Prov. 27. 22.

2 This is for our instruction: that if we would carry the Name of Christians, and be such indeed, then we must learne our duty, to the intent we may doe it; and every one strive principally to know what he himselfe should be. Many labour to speake well, and to have words of discourse, but let us learn to [*doe*] well: which if we indeavour to doe, then we shall be blessed in our worke. *Vse 2.* *Iames 1.22.*

3 Here is matter of great consolation for us: For hereby we may gather good assurance unto our owne hearts, of the soundnesse of our repentance, and conversion unto the Lord: This being here in the Text set downe as an infallible note of those that have indeed turned from their evill waies to serve the living God, that they *learne to doe well*. Therfore they may take this for their comfort, who are still proposing of good questions, what they must doe, and how they must do it? By what meanes they may get out of this or that sin, and attaine to such or such a grace? How they may bee most profitable, helpefull, and comfortable to themselves and others? This was the practise of the Publicans and Souldiers, and of all sorts that were inwardly touched in their consciences by the preaching of *Iohn Baptist*: every one of them came unto him, saying, What must we doe? And of the Iaylor, who when once he began to be humbled, came trembling, and fell down before *Paul* and *Silas*, saying, *Sirs, what must I doe to be saved?* For howsoever Gods servants have learned for the most part, what things in generall must be done, yet still they need to bee informed of many things; as whether such and such things come within the compasse of their callings? What warrant there is for it in the Word? Whether it may bee done at such a time, in such a place, before, with, or amongst such persons? What circumstances they must observe in their proceeding? What affection they must carry in the matter? and the like. For they finde such ignorance and corruption in their hearts, that they thinke they are never sufficiently furnished with wisedome & goodnesse for the performance of holy duties, but are still jealous and suspicious of themselves, lest they should be led aside with by-respects. *Vse 3.* Proposing of good questions. *Luke 3.* *Act. 16.29.30.*

How-

Howsoever such men and women think, and speak hardly of themselves, and are still bewayling their manifold imperfections and failings in every good exercise; yet the Ministers of God find, that of all others, they are the worthiest hearers, and practisers of the Word, and receivers of the Sacrament. Many count them learned Christians, that have gotten such knowledge, as that they can say much: but they are in truth the best learned, that have obtained grace to doe much: according to the exhortation of the Prophet in this place, *Learne to doe well.*

Note.

Seeke judgement.] Now because men will very easily shift off generall precepts, he contenteth not himselfe with the former exhortation, but as he had bidden them to *doe well*, so here he commeth to particulars, and sheweth them wherin their chiefe and principall care and indeavour should be, to *doe well: Seeke judgement, &c.* He had before charged them, that their hands were full of Bloud, and that their great men, and men of authority were notable oppressors and spoylers of their brethren and neighbours that were meaner than themselves: following after rewards, and not judging the Fatherlesse and the widow, nor suffering them to have equity according to the goodnesse of their cause: but rather abusing their authority to the hurt of the good, and to the maintenance of the bad, in their lewd and sinfull practises. If honest men had never so good a Cause, and never so good a Conscience, yet if they brought them no bribes, they were like to goe by the worst: and if sinfull and wretched persons had never so ill a Cause, yet if they presented them with great gifts, they should carry it from all others. Now the Prophets purpose being to bring these men to repentance, he saith, *Seeke judgement*, that is, search diligently what ought to be done according to your places; and when you know it, see that you practise it. Whence ariseth this point: That,

Doct. 5. Every one must doe his owne duty.

It is a note of true repentance, and of an honest and sincere heart, to discharge the duties that belong unto us in our places and callings. For looke what is here said of Magistrates and men of higher places, that if they would manifest the

soundnesse

ſoundneſſe of their repentance, and the uprightneſſe of their hearts, they ſhould leave off their oppreſſion, and fall to equall dealing betwixt man and man: the like holds in all other callings, and among men of all ſorts and degrees, to wit, that they put to their utmoſt indeavor, to finde out what are the works of that vocation wherein God hath ſet them, and accordingly to doe the ſame, reforming the ſpeciall things, wherein they have faulted heretofore.

This *Iob* lets downe as a marke, that he was no hypocrite, (though his friends injuriouſly charged him to bee ſuch a one) becauſe hee was carefull of thoſe good duties that did pertaine to him in his place, both as he was a Magiſtrate, and as hee was a rich man; in both which reſpects, hee ſhewed all good faithfulneſſe: for as hee was a Magiſtrate, he ſaith, *I relieved the poore that cryed, & him that had none to help him. The bleſſing of him that was ready to periſh, came upon me, & I cauſed the widows heart to rejoyce: I put on juſtice, & it covered me: My judgement was a robe and a Crowne, &c.* Neither would he ſhift off matters to eaſe himſelfe, and to free himſelfe from paines and troubles; but (ſaith hee) *If I knew not the cauſe, I would ſearch it out diligently:* and though the prey were in their hands, nay, as it were in the mouthes of thoſe that were ſtrong, and fierce as Lyons: Yet hee ſaith, that *hee would breake the jawes of the unrighteous man, & pluck the prey out of his teeth.* He would adventure himſelfe for the innocent in a righteous cauſe, though it were with as great danger, as for a man to pull the prey out of the jawes of ſome hungry and ſavage wild beaſt, that would be ready to devoure any that ſhould come neere him. Iob 29. 12.

Then as he was a rich man, he ſheweth that hee diſpoſed his wealth to that end, whereunto God hath appointed it: *I was* (ſaith he) *a Father unto the poore. I reſtrained him not of his deſire, nor cauſed the eyes of the widow to fail. I did not eat my morſels alone, but the fatherleſſe did eat thereof. And from his youth he grew up with me, as with a father, &c. I ſaw none periſh for want of cloathing, nor any poore without covering; but their loynes bleſſed me, becauſe they were warmed with the fleece of my Sheepe.* Iob 19. Iob 31. 16.

Further

Further, that this faithfulneſſe in a mans owne calling, is a notable teſtimony of an upright heart, and of a good conſcience, it appeareth by the ſpeech of our Saviour, where hee approveth himſelfe, and his actions unto his Father, ſaying, *Father, I have glorified thee on Earth:* How proves he that? *I have finiſhed the worke which thou gaveſt mee to doe.* Many times men ſet upon workes which God never commanded them to doe, but which their owne Fleſh and Satan bad them doe: or if they begin to goe about good works that the Lord commandeth, they doe not goe thorow with the ſame, as Chriſt Ieſus did: and therefore they neither bring glory to Gods Name, nor comfort unto themſelver by that which they doe: but this is it indeed which will ſtand men in ſtead, when they ſhall come to make their accounts before the Lords Iudgement Seat, if they can truely ſay, Lord I have done the worke that thou didſt appoint mee; I have bin exerciſed in thoſe buſineſſes and affaires which thou didſt injoyne mee, and have gone thorow with the ſame. So, when Chriſt Ieſus would commend a worthy ſervant; what is the Commendation that he hath given him? That hee hath faithfully imployed thoſe Talents and gifts, that his Maſter committed unto his truſt, unto his beſt advantage. And this (as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh) is required of diſpoſers; *that every one be found faithful:* that is, that they diſcharge every one the duties that pertaine unto them in their places, with all due care, and conſcionable regard.

John 17.4.

Matth. 25.

1 Cor. 4. 2.

Vſe 1. This ſerves for the juſt reproofe of thoſe that make ſome ſhew of Chriſtianity, and would faine goe under the Name and number of ſound profeſſors of the Goſpell, and yet are moſt unfaithfull in their owne charges. Many are good Neighbours abroad, and bad Governours at home. They can adviſe others for the beſt, but they have no care at all to order their owne Families in the feare of God. Many husbands are kinde and courteous abroad, but churliſh and unmerciſull to their Yoke-fellowes, and to their Children and Servants at home. Many wives will ſeeme religious, who yet are not helpes in their Family, nor ſeeking in all good and lawfull

things

things to content and please their Husbands, but are disobedient and undutifull unto them. Such Masters, and Husbands, and Wives, can have little comfort of their faithfulnes, when they faile most in those things wherein the power of godlinesse should most shew it selfe; namely, in discharging a good Conscience, where they are tyed so to doe by the neareſt and strongest Bond.

And this is a great fault in divers Servants, who when they have gotten a little knowledge of Religion, and can discourse of some points thereof, begin to thinke, that then they have a dispensation to be idle and slothfull, head-strong, and masterfull, testy and impatient when they are told of their faults; and the like. Oh, this is a wofull use that they make of their reading & hearing the Word of God! If they had well observed that which most concerns them, they should have found, that the Lord commandeth Servants, *To please their Masters in all things, not answering them again, & to shew all good faithfulnes, that they may adorn the Doctrin of God our Saviour in all things.* Tit. 2. 9. 10.
And againe, *Servants be obedient unto them that are your Masters according to the flesh, with fear & trembling, in singlenes of your hearts, as unto Christ.* Ephes. 6. 5.
And no lesse effectuall is that other place of *Paul* to *Timothy*: *Let as many Servants as are under the yoke, count their Master worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his Doctrine be not evill spoken of. And they that have beleeving Masters, let thē not despise thē because they are brethren, but rather doe service, because they are faithfull & beloved, and partakers of the benefit.* 1 Tim. 6. 1. 2.
And that was a thing worthy singular commendation in *Iacob*, that he served *Laban* (though a covetous, deceitfull, and hard Master) *with all his might: being in the day consumed with heat, and with frost in the night; his sleep also departing from his eyes.* Gen. 31. 6. 40.
And therfore those Servants are much to be blamed, that make Religion an occasion of their unfaithfulnesse; which, by how much it is more thorowly and deeply rooted and settled in the hearts of any, should and will make them more true and trustie, more conscionable and faithfull to their Rulers and Governors. And the like may be said of Children: What gifts of knowledge and speech soever they have, they can have no comfort of the same, unlesse they give all honour,

nour and reverence, and shew all dutie and obedience unto their Parents, as the Lord commandeth them.

This may be an instruction unto us. Would we be Christs Schollers? Then the first Letter & Lesson that we must learne, is, To doe well in our places. Are we Children? Let us labour by searching of the Scriptures, to know our duties, and to doe them. Are we Servants? Let us get understanding of the things that doe most concerne us in all our places, and let our practise be answerable to our profession, & then we shal shew our selves to be truly religious indeed. And the same exhortation might be given to all others, in their severall Vocations: Which if we can follow, whatsoever our Callings be, *we serve the Lord Christ in them*, & shall be sure of full reward frō him. Oh, but my Calling is meane, and my service base. Though your worke be base, yet is it not a base thing to serve such a Master in it. They are the most worthy servants, whatsoever their imployment be, that do with most conscionable and dutifull hearts and mindes serve the Lord, where he hath placed them, and in those works which he hath allotted unto them.

Note.

[*Relieve the oppressed.*] Having in the former words shewed them, that they must doe that which is just and right, hee commeth now more particularly to declare unto them wherin that consisteth; namely, in shewing mercy to such as are in misery, and in being meanes of comfort unto them that are in discomfort, and griefe of heart. Whence this Doctrine may be collected: that,

Doct. 6. Mercy to the afflicted, an excellent service,

It is a most acceptable service unto the Lord, to comfort & relieve his people when they are in misery and distresse.

This is a work so well pleasing unto God, that he pronounceth them happy and blessed, that consider wisely, and judge charitably of the poore and needy: Though they have no ability to helpe them, or to direct and counsell them, yet if they can but prudently and mercifully consider with themselves; Surely this man or woman have carried themselves so holily and blameleſſe, that this stroke is not fallen upon them for their wickednesse, nor for their foolishnes, but for their good and comfort, as in the end it will appeare. This mercifull judgement and censure, concerning those that have many, &

Psal 41. 1.

strange

ſtrange and heavy croſſes lying upon them, is a thing that God much regardeth, and recompenceth in all that are ſo affected towards his poore diſtreſſed ſervants. This alſo the Apoſtle *Iames* yeeldeth, as an undoubted marke of true Religion, ſaying; *Pure Religion, and undefiled before God, even the Father is this, To viſit the Fatherleſſe and Widows in their adverſity, and to keepe himſelfe unſpotted of the World.* His meaning is not, that it is Religion it ſelfe (for that is a thing belonging to the firſt Table) but a ſigne of the ſame, when our faith in God, and love unto God, maketh us pittifull and liberall towards the Children and Saints of God, and ſuch as he would have reſpected and relieved. Iames 1.27.

So, at the great and generall Day of Iudgement, when al the World ſhall come to receive Sentence according to their workes, whether good or evill; what is the matter of commendation that is given to the Elect, and the moſt evident marke of difference between the Sheepe and the Goats? even this, That they deſired to doe good; not in ſome one or two, or in ſome few, but in every work of Mercy, and of Charity: *That they fed the hungry, gave drinke unto the thirſty, cloathed the naked, viſited the ſicke & impriſoned.* And on the other ſide, the Reprobate ſhall not be charged and condemned juſtly for this; That they did not the good that they might have done unto poore Chriſtians in their wants and miſeries. Matthi 25.35.

And further, this ſheweth it to be an excellent ſervice, for one to ſtretch forth his hand in relieving the needy, and in ſuccouring diſtreſſed ſoules: that whatſoever kindneſſe is done to the leaſt of them, Chriſt ſets it on his Score, and counts it as done unto himſelfe; and he will acknowledge it, and reward it, both in this preſent life, and in that which is to come. *Reaſons.*

Every one will come to this, That if Chriſt Ieſus ſhould repaire unto their houſes, hungry, or thirſty, or cold, or naked, they would with al their hearts part with any thing they have to refreſh and relieve him: let ſuch heare then what Chriſt himſelfe ſaith to them that ſhew mercy to the poore Saints; *In as much therfore as ye have done it to one of the leaſt of theſe my Brethren, ye have done it unto me*, Math. 25.

Which is firſt for the great condemnation of them that do alto- *Uſe 1.*

altogether ſhut up their bowels of compaſſion from Gods children in their ſorrowes, and temptations, and afflictions, *Whoſoever hath this worlds good, & ſeeth his brother have need,* (ſaith the Apoſtle *Iohn*) *& ſhutteth up his compaſſion frō him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* This goeth ſore againſt ſuch: for in not loving his children, they proclaime unto all the world, that they love not God himſelfe, and therefore are not beloved of him. And if it be ſo with thoſe that doe not make manifeſt their love, by ſhewing mercy; what ſhall wee think of thoſe, that are ſo farre from pittying and relieving the diſtreſſed, that they are ready to add affliction to the afflicted? It is juſt upon you (they ſay;) your indiſcretion and want of wiſedome (in that you made more adoe then needs, & would be more preciſe than wiſe, & more forward then your neighbours, &c.) hath brought you to all this woe & miſery. This is cruell and unmercifull dealing: if they would doe them no good, they ſhould doe them no hurt. Yet this was the caſe of *Iob*, and of *David* in their great calamities and perplexities; and we may reade of the lamentable complaints that both of them made in that reſpect. If it be a marke of a damnable perſon, to with-hold mercy from the ſorrowfull and heavy-hearted, then what ſhall become of them, that lay heavy burthens on thoſe that are preſſed downe too low before? If *there ſhall be judgement, without mercy, to them that ſhew no mercy*; much more fearefull ſhall their ſtate be, that are ſo full of cruelty towards them, whom the Lord ſo tenderly reſpecteth?

a Iohn 3.17.

Vſe 2. Here is a ſingular comfort for Gods children, that are in many wants and neceſſities: So long as there is any godly man or woman, that will doe any thing for Chriſt his ſake, & for their own comforts ſake, they ſhall not be deſtitute of reliefe: For God hath commanded his ſervants to ſuccour them, and hath made many gracious promiſes to ſuch as are mercifull, & will beare the burthen of others. And if men ſhould faile them, the Lord himſelfe will looke unto them; who beholds their troubles, and ſees their teares, & is acquainted with al their griefes. And he that bids others to be mercifull, will not be unmercifull himſelfe. And therefore it is, that men doe deny us helpe and comfort many times, becauſe God would have us draw

neerer unto him; whose eies are ever upon us, and whose eares are alwayes open to heare the cryes of the poore, and of those that are humbled before him.

Therefore let the Saints of God make full reckoning that one way or other they shall be provided for; if men will not, God will. Onely let them be sure that they be found in the number of those that be humbled in spirit, & broken in heart, for to such alone do the mercies of God appertaine. If one be a Gamester, or an unthrift, or a riotous person, or a Drunkard, or given up to any such reprochfull vice: or if there be any that will not take pains to get their living by diligence and labour in their honest calling, but give themselves to idlenesse and sluggishnesse, God himself will not (in mercie at least) and his children must not relieve such kinde of persons: *He that will not labour, must not eate:* And the best almes for such is, to give them nurture and correction, that they may desist from their lewd behaviour, and betake themselves to better course. Psal. 3. 2 Thes. 3. 10.

18 [*Come now, let us reason together.*] Here the Prophet prevents an objection, that they might make. It it long ere men be brought to the sight of their sins: but when they come once to perceive the multitude, and grievousnes of them, they begin to thinke their case remediless; and that it is in vaine to hope for pardon: but God bids them make no such conclusions, and therefore he saith, [*Come now, let us reason together:*] which is in effect, as if he should have said, If you harken what the Divell, and the flesh can say, then will you rather despaire, than beleeve: and therefore heare you withall what I can say: which if we could do, we should easily see, that the arguments of Satan, and of our owne wretched carnall reason, are but delusions, and that Gods arguments must swallow them up all, even as *Moses* true Serpent did the Serpents of the Sorcerers. Hence we may learne this Doctrine: That,

Doct. 7. God is to be heard before any.

They that will come to the Lord, and do him service, must not hearken what Reasons Flesh and Blood can yeeld them against it, but what Reasons God can give them for it.

The Devill will have much to say against goodnes; and our own fleshly wisedome will have as much, and the world will be as great a pull-backe unto us, if we will give it the hearing:

but if we can lend an attentive eare unto the Lord, we ſhall finde that he will bring better arguments to perſwade us to goodneſſe, than all thoſe our Enemies can, to diſſwade us from it. And therefore it is that men are ſo often, and ſo groſly deceived, becauſe they heare what the one ſide can ſay to diſcourage and hinder them: but not what the other can ſay, to hearten and draw them onward in good wayes. For if they did bring a ſpirituall eare to receive the proofes that are brought from the word, they would be more forcible to bring them to God, than any other meanes could be to allure them to forſake God, and to embrace this preſent world. Therefore when the Lord would have men to practice any duty, or to forbeare any ſin, we ſee what ſtrong reaſons he bringeth for that purpoſe: as is evident (together with innumerable other places) in the ſecond and in the fourth Commandment. And hence it is, that men do ſo commonly, and ſo wretchedly tranſgreſſe thoſe Commandements, becauſe they do not well weigh the Lords reaſons to the contrary: for if they did, they would never incline ſo much to Superſtition and Idolatry; nor ever ſo give themſelves to the profaning of the Lords Day, but know that it is farre better to procure Gods bleſſing by keeping it, than his curſe and vengeance by the violating of it.

Holy *Iob* (we ſee) tooke that courſe that the Lord would have us take for the repreſſing of all inordinate luſts and affections; *I made* (ſaith hee) *a covenant with my eyes; why then ſhould I thinke on a Maid?* A carnall ſinfull man would have thought this too much curioſitie and niceneſſe: What, not to looke on the beauty and comely viſage of a Woman? At leaſt, not to take ſome liberty for thoughts tending that way? It is too too much preciſeneſſe: who can take any notice of ſuch things in us? Oh (ſaid *Iob*) *what portion ſhould I have of God from above? And what inheritance from the Almighty from on high? q.d.* I durſt not give any way unto the Fleſh in any ſort; for that were the directeſt courſe to deprive my ſelfe of the comforts of the Word and Spirit here, and of the Crowne of happineſſe, which is reſerved for the Saints in the World to come. Albeit I ſhould ſpeed little the worſe with men, yet I ſhould be ſure to come ſhort of many ſpeciall favours & bleſ-

Iob 31.1.

Verſe 2.

ſings

ſings of the Lord. And further he addeth, *Is not deſtruction to the wicked, and ſtrange puniſhments to the workers of iniquitie?* q.d. Suppoſe I ſhould eſcape the cenſures of men, yet hath not the Lord means that I cannot conceive of, for the puniſhment of rebellious ſinners? And though things may be ſmothered for a time; cannot he bring ſecret ſins to open ſhame? Grant that it be kept cloſe from the eyes of the World? yet, *Doth not he behold my wayes, and tell my ſteps?* Though the eyes of men take the view onely of the outward actions, yet he looketh upon the inward diſpoſition, and affection of the heart: Theſe and the like reaſons he uſed to keep himſelf in order, and to fright his conſcience from all manner of ſin and impietie, as is more fully deſcribed unto us in that Chapter.

And good reaſon there is, why we ſhould eſteeme Gods arguments above any other, becauſe he is Wiſedome it ſelfe, and therefore ſeeth what is beſt for us; and he is Love it ſelfe, and therefore will direct us in the way, which ſhall appeare to be moſt ſafe, and moſt comfortable in the end, what ſtumbling blocks and rubs ſoever we finde therein for a ſeaſon. *Reaſon.*

The Divell, the World, and the Fleſh bring onely ſhews of reaſon, and pretend love unto us, when they meane nothing leſſe, as the event will plainly manifeſt: but Gods reaſons will hold out when they are weighed in the Ballance, and what he ſaith ſhall ſtand, when heaven and earth ſhall fall: and if we take thoſe courſes that he would have us, we ſhall plainly perceive at laſt, that he meant us more good in ſo adviſing us, than we could poſſibly thinke or imagine.

This ſheweth and condemneth their folly, who, when they have motions or perſwaſions to undertake any good thing, or any purpoſe to become more ſober & ſtaied in their carriage and courſe of life, will firſt heare what their carnal freinds can ſay, and what the World, and their owne Fleſh can alledge, Alas, theſe men are more likely a great deale to renounce all goodneſſe, than to continue in the practiſe of any godlineſſe. If once they give eare to the reaſons of the devill, and of the Fleſh, they are gone. For as the perſwaſions of God by his Word and Spirit, ſhould make us begin, ſo muſt they cauſe us to hold on, or elſe we ſhould faint in the mid-way, or rather *Vſe 1.*

turne aside, and walke in a quite contrary way.

And as this is true in generall for the profession of Christianity, so is it as true in all particular duties; as to give instance in some: those that have to deale in matters of strife and contention, for the most part are possest with the conceit, that if they should not answer like for like, and returne one disgracefull speech for another, and requite one injurious action with another, every one would in a short time grow bold with them, and be ready to wrong and abuse them. But where doth God say so? Nay, the very truth is, that when they seeke by such means to right themselves, and by such a shield to defend themselves, and to repell their adversaries, whereas they had men onely against them before, now they have three for one against them, to wit, God and men, & their own consciences, whereas if they would follow Christ his rule, *To blesse those that curse them, and to do good to those that hate them, and to pray for those that hurt and persecute them, and so overcome evil with goodnesse*, they should certainly have the Lord, and their owne consciences on their side, and it may be also make their foes to become their friends by that meanes. For the wisdome of God telleth us, that this is the way to *heape coals of fire upon their heads*: which shall either melt them, and turne their affection to us, or burne them, and leave them more inexcusable before God, and their owne consciences, and so hasten his judgements upon them. If men can be patient, and content to sit down by wrongs offered, God will stand for them, and revenge the quarrell of the meeke. And however in our corrupt judgement we thinke, that by passing by offences, and patient bearing of injuries, we shall expose our selves to all manner of indignities & losses: yet by good experience we shall find that saying of the holy Ghost to be true, *The meeke shall inherit the earth: and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.*

Note.

Matth. 5. 44.

Rom. 12. 20.

Others there are that thinke: if we should make conscience of religion, & begin to reade the Word, to frequent Sermons, to have prayer in our Families, and the like: this would make us to be scoffed and mocked at, and to be termed precise fools for our paines. But let such heare what the Word saith, that pronounceth them blessed, that *delight in the Law of the Lord,*

Psal. 1.

and

and meditate therein day and night, and that seek him with their whole hearts: Yea, albeit they should meet with some disgrace and opposition in the world: *Blessed are ye* (saith Christ) *when men revile you, and persecute you, and speake all manner of evill against you falsly, for my Name sake: Rejoyce and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven.* Is it not better to indure a little mocking from men for a time, and that for wel-doing, than to undergo the wrath of God for ever for ill-doing? Consider in particular what benefit we may reape by the Ministery of the Gospell. *Heare* (saith the Prophet *Isaiah*) *and thy Soule shall live. Receive the Word with meekenesse* (saith *Iames*) *which is able to save your soules. Blessed is he that readeth and heareth the words of this Propheſie* (saith the Spirit in the *Revelation*) and on the other side; *He that turneth away his eare from hearing the Law, his prayer shall be abomination* (saith *Solomon:*) and againe the wisedome of God speaketh thus, *Because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and none would regard: But ye have despised all my counsell, and would none of my correction: I will also laugh at your destruction, and mocke when your feare commeth.* These, and the like places, if we could thorowly consider of, they would worke more powerfully with us to cause us to desire the Word, and to retaine, and keepe our hearts still in the love and liking of it, than all their reproaches, and persecutions in the World could, to with-draw our affections from it.

Psal. 119.

Matth 5.

Isay 55.3.
Iames 1.21.
Revel. 1.3.
Prov. 28.9.

Prov. 1.24,25, 26.

But for want of this, many sore and dangerous; yea, sometimes desperate evils do befall men: for if we consult with Reason, it will tell us that either our sins are so great, that they cannot be pardoned: or else so small, that they need not to be repented for. This made *Cain* and *Judas*, those cursed & damnable reprobates, to despaire, and cast off all hope of mercie, because they would not hearken what God, or his Servants could say, but only what Satan, and their own Flesh could say: whereas if it had bin possible for them to have looked into the Promises of Life, made unto grievous sinners, and in assurance of Faith have craved remission and pardon for their offences, they might have bin forgiven; even *Cain* and *Judas*, as well as *Peter* and *Paul*: for they had all committed damnable sins in

them-

themselves; and that repentance which prevailed for *Peter* and *Paul*, would have beene as effectuall for the two other, if they had attended to Gods voyce, and humbly, and earnestly sought for mercy at his hands.

Vse 2. This serves also for our instruction, that in all our greifes and miseries, we should reason rather with God, than with Men. For if we be in distresse for our Estate, or in sicknesse of body, or in perplexitie of Soule; in any of them, or in all of them, let us go unto Men, and they will most commonly serve us, as *Jobs* Freinds did him; lay sorer burdens on us, rather than ease us of those we carry already; and make our case a great deale worse than it is, rather than minister any help and comfort unto us.

Note.

But if we can heare and beleeve what the Scriptures of God tell us; we shall find that our state is never unrecoverable: but that if we can be truly, and soundly humbled, there is hope and helpe for us, that God will give us an happy end of all our sorrowes, and make us great gainers by all our afflictions and temptations.

Though our sinnes were as crimson, they shall be made as white as snow.] In these words, the Prophet hath reference to that that went before, where he had charged the; that their hands were full of bloue, *Ver.* 15. For hereupon they might reply: If we be such grievous sinners, how can we dare to come unto God for favor? Is it not a terrible thing to appeare before him that is so just and holy? How then can we look that he should be mercifull unto us? Say not so (saith the Prophet) that is but a reason of the Flesh: As if God were no fuller of mercy than mortall men are: Or as if he could do no more than they can: Yes, we must know, that howsoever men be unable to change Crimson, or scarlet colour into white again, albeit they should lay all their wits and endevours together, and pull one threed from another: Yet God can make your sinnes that are as crimson, and as Scarlet, to become white as woolle; yea, as Snow it selfe. If we once fall a washing of our selves, God will set in with us, and never leave til all our iniquities (even in our own apprehension and feeling) be quite & cleane removed from us, so that none of them shall be imputed unto us, but all set upon Christs Score.

Objection.

Answer.

They

They that waſh themſelves by godly ſorrow, the Lord will waſh them from all their ſins by the Blood of his Sonne: that whatſoever offences we repent for, we ſhall be ſure to have a pardon for. *Doct. 2.* Penitent perſons ſhall be waſhed from all their ſins.

So that the queſtion is not, what our faults have beene, but what our repentance is. If we be truly dejected on our part, it is all one with God whether our tranſgreſſions have bin more or leſſe, greater or ſmaller: If we repent truly we ſhall be pardoned fully, be our ſinnes what they can be, ſecret or knowne. So that though we ſee ſpots in our ſelves, yet God will ſee none: Nay, when we ſee our deformity moſt, God will make it moſt cleare unto us, that his eies are quite turned away from the ſame. This is evident in the Prophet *Jeremie*, where he ſpeaketh thus concerning them that ſhould be made truly penitent for all their evill wayes and works, after their ſeventie yeares captivity: *In thoſe dayes, & at that time* (ſaith the Lord) *the iniquitie of Iſrael ſhall be ſought for, and there ſhall be none: And the ſinnes of Judah, and they ſhall not be found, for I will be mercifull unto them whom I reſerve*: And the ſame is promiſed in another place, where the holy Ghoſt ſpeaketh thus: *If we acknowledge our ſinnes, he is faithfull and juſt to forgive us our ſinnes, and to cleanſe us from all unrighteouſneſſe.* And the like is covenanted in *Ezekiel*, where the Prophet bringeth in the Lord, ſpeaking in this manner: *Then will I powre cleane water, and ye ſhall be cleane, &c.* where God himſelfe undertaketh to be the Waſher, and the Blood of Chriſt is the Water. Now there are two things which terrifie penitent ſinners, and cauſe their hope of obtaining mercy either utterly to faile, or at leaſt in a great part to faint and waxe feeble: Concerning both which, the Lord in this place giveth them comfort.

Ier. 5. 20.

1 Ioh. 1. 9.

Ezek. 36. &c.

One is the multitude and exceeding great number of evils whereof they are guilty: Now for that, he telleth them, that he would *waſh them from all their filthineſſe*, without exception.

Another thing that doth uſually diſquiet the hearts of thoſe that are turning unto God, is, that their ſinnes have beene haynous and extraordinary, and many of them ſuch as have broken the Covenant, of which ſort is Idolatry: Concerning

which

Zech. 13.1. which, he addeth, *and from all your Idols will I cleanse you:* And in another place, he promiseth to open a Fountaine of Grace to wash them from all sinnes, even from sinnes of Separation, and such presumptuous offences as deserved Excommunication from Gods People; yea, and to be cut off by the Sword of the Magistrate.

And there is no cause to the contrary, but that God may remit and pardon one sinne as well as another, and all as well as one, if they be repented for.

Reason 1 1 Because Christ Iesus hath satisfied for all alike: For the greatest, as well as for the smallest: For every one as well as for any one: For so saith the Prophet *Isaiah: He hath borne our* Isa. 53.4,5,6. *infirmities, and carried our sorrows, &c. He was wounded for our transgressions, and broken for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him, & by his stripes we were healed. All we like Sheepe have gone astray: We have turned every one to his owne way, and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all.* Whence it is plaine and evident, that Christ hath payed our whole debt, and not a piece of it onely: he hath discharged our pounds, as well as our pence: and hath suffered for our most horrible and fearfull rebellions, as well as for our smallest slips. And therefore as an honest Creditor, when the Suretie hath satisfied him for all that was owing, will not come with after-reckonings, nor challenge any thing of the Debtor: So neither will the Lord lay any thing to our charge, his Sonne Christ Iesus having laid down the full price for our iniquities, whereby his wrath is appeased, and his justice perfectly satisfied. This is one reason on Gods part, why he must of necessitie blot out of his Booke, and out of his remembrance, all the offences of repentant sinners, without any exception at all.

2 2 Another reason there is on our part, and that is, that he that repenteth truly for one sin, doth repent as truly for all the rest: and though none do particularly know and discerne all the errours of his life, yet if we make a particular confession of Psal. 19. those we know, and a generall acknowledgement of those we know not, God will graciously accept us, and will shew himselfe more pleased with our humiliation, than he was offended with our disobedience: So that from both these layd together (that

(that neither Gods Iuſtice is unſatisfied, nor any ſin unrepented in thoſe that labor to waſh their ſoules by true and godly ſorrow) it is apparant, that there is no tranſgreſſion, no, not the moſt hainous, that ſhall ſtand in record againſt them, but al ſhall be remitted and covered from Gods ſight, that hee ſhall never looke upon them in anger and indignation any more.

Why the pardon of great ſinnes is not ſo ſoone apprehended.

Indeed, thoſe that have fallen into more notorious and grievous Crimes, cannot ordinarily get the aſſurance of their reconciliation unto the Lord, ſo ſoone as others that have not beene ſo great offenders; but the cauſe hereof is in themſelves: in that ſuch open and ſcandalous offences doe make an exceeding great breach into their Faith, and bring marvellous great hardneſſe upon their hearts; & they are very unwilling to ſet their Conſciences upon the rack, and to ſift and examine their owne ſoules, to the intent their hearts may be pierced and wounded for their ſinnes: but they will rather hide their iniquities, & put off their humiliation as long as may be (as *David* did, *Pſal.* 32.) So that it is a wonder they ever get out of the ſnares of the Divell, till God either by ſome ſharp rebuke, or by ſome ſore affliction doe rowſe them, and as it were by violent hand pull them out of the fire.

But if once they come to due ſorrow for their ſins, and in humbleneſſe of heart, and aſſurance of Faith, can make clayme to the bloud of Chriſt, they ſhall be diſcharged and freed from all their tranſgreſſions, and bee brought to that purity and whiteneſſe, which they never dreamed ſuch miſerable creatures as themſelves could have attained unto.

Vſe 1. Againſt Purgatorie.

For confutation of that wretched error of the Papiſts, that would beare men in hand, That there is a *Purgatory*, where ſome men, after this life, muſt have a further purging & ſcowring than here they have attained unto: but ſee here what the Lord ſaith; Though men have broken forth into never ſo many abhominations, though their ſins were as Crimſon, and as Scarlet, yet if they would ſeek to waſh and cleanſe themſelves by the meanes that God hath appointed, hee giveth them his faithfull promiſe, that they ſhall be made white as Woull, yea, white as Snow, as if they never offended at all. To what end then ſhould men appoint a ſecond waſhing, when God him-

ſelfe

ſelfe hath undertaken to waſh us from all our filthineſſe, and from our greateſt corruptions? (as hath been more largely declared before.) What an abſurd thing is it, to imagine, that we muſt go thorow a ſtrange invented fire, which may more thorowly purge away the droſſe of our corruptions? as if Chriſts bloud were not ſufficient to make us white as Snow? This is but a carnall conceit of mans fooliſh braine: for if fire and torments could have ſcowred off ſin, the Reprobates in hell ſhold have been purged there-from long agoe. But God alone hath cleane and precious Water, & a skilfull and powerfull Hand, to effect that Worke. And in the *Revelation*, Chriſt Ieſus, the true and faithfull Witneſſe, telleth us how all our uncleaneſſe may be covered from Gods eyes: *I counſell thee* (ſaith hee to the Church of *Laodicea*) *to buy of me white Rayment that thou mayeſt be clothed, and that thy filthy nakednes may not appear.* Revel. 3. 18: Nakedneſſe there is in the beſt; but Chriſt his righteouſneſſe is that Garment which muſt cover it: & then *God* will never in anger and diſpleaſure look upon it, but in mercy and goodneſſe looke upon the holineſſe of his Sonne, wherewith our ſoules are inveſted, and all our iniquities hidden and covered.

Secondly, here is matter of great comfort unto thoſe that do in good earneſt ſet upon this worke of cleanſing and purging themſelves: they ſhall not be deſtitute of company to joyne with them; for God himſelfe will aſſiſt them, and give moſt happy ſucceſſe to this their indevour. And therfore this ſhould incourage us unto the exerciſes of humiliation, and of examination and judging of our ſelves: For are not a few teares well beſtowed upon God, when he will thereupon beſtow on us the Bloud of his owne beloved Sonne?

Many are afraid to adventure upon the work of repentance, leſt they ſhould be driven thereby to deſperation; but let us never feare that, though our uncleanceſſe be never ſo great: Though we be ſtayned and dyed from top to toe, within and without, in every part & power of ſoule and body, by reaſon of our originall corruption, and actuall tranſgreſſions, ſo that all the men in the world cannot take away the foule ſpots and horrible ſtaines of ſin that cleave unto us, and are ſetled in us; yet the Lord of Heaven, who hath all ſufficiencie of power in his

his hand, can and will (without any difficulty) purge us from every one of our iniquities, by ſprinkling on our hearts the precious Bloud of his owne Sonne: which is, as it were, a ſoveraigne Bath, ordained for the cleanſing of the ſoules of his Elect from that contagious Leproſie of ſinne, wherewith they are wholly over-ſpread. And therefore let none be diſcomforted in regard of his many and grievous offences, ſeeing that the Lord hath entred into a ſure covenant with us, for the pardoning and healing of them all; who can as eaſily cure the moſt deadly wound, as the ſmalleſt skarre; and the harder the cure is, the more he ſhall be glorified, in ſhewing forth the riches of his mercy towards poore ſinners that ſtand in need thereof. Our greateſt extremity is Gods fitteſt opportunity.

Now the chiefe meanes that he uſeth for our cleanſing and ſanctifying, are two: Meanes of cleanſing.

One, is the Word; which being received into the heart by Faith, doth purifie the ſame: according to that of our Saviour to his Diſciples; *Now are ye cleane, through the word that I have ſpoken unto you.* 1 The Word. Ioh 15.3.

Another meanes, is the Sacrament: wherby God is ready to convey unto us the merit and vertue of his Sons death, by the effectuall operation of his Spirit, that Chriſt may be unto us holineſſe for our ſanctification, as well as righteouſnes for our juſtification. God doth not offer unto us onely the outward elements, but he is alſo more willing to give unto us the things ſignified thereby, than any earthly Father can be to give food unto his hungry Childe, that cryeth for ſome reliefe at his hands, when he hath all plenty and abundance wherby to ſupply his need: I ſay, he is ſo much more willing than any earthly Father, as *God* is kinder than man, & his ſtore more plentifull than mans: and it is leſſe coſt, & leſſe paines unto him, and yet more for his praiſe, to refreſh the thirſty ſouls of his poore ſervants, than for a mortall man to ſatisfie the appetite of his hungry childe: For (as the Prophet ſpeaketh) *Mercy pleaſeth him.* There is none that can take more delight in following after their recreations & pleaſures, that do moſt affect them, than the *Lord* doth, in ſhewing himſelfe favourable unto thoſe that ſeeke mercy and grace from him, in the uſe of his Ordinances. 2 The Sacrament. 1. Cor. 1. 30. Micah 7. 8.

Objection. [*If ye consent to obey*] The next thing that might hinder and dismay them from turning unto the *Lord* by sound repentance is, That he is so holy and righteous, and his Law so strict and rigorous, and they so sinfull & rebellious, that it were in vaine for them to goe about to yeeld obedience thereunto, they should never attaine unto it; and therefore as good for them never to begin the worke, as not to accomplish and finish the same. And thence it is, that a number sit downe as sluggards, and never set one foot forward in the way of godlinesse, because they imagine, that there is a greater difficultie in Evangelicall obedience, than indeed there is; little knowing what Gods meaning is, when hee calleth upon us to be obedient.

Answer. For his purpose is, not to urge us to a perfect fulfilling of the Law, such as was required of *Adam* before his fall; but onely that we should doe our best endevour, & labour to conforme our selves to his will as neere as we can: if there be a true sincere love, and a hearty consent, to shew our selves dutifull and loyall subjects to him in all things, it is as much as he exacteth of us. The Doctrine to be learned from hence, is this: that,

Doct. 9. God accepteth of penitent persons, the will for the deed. As for the ful filling of the Law in absolute perfection, that Christ alone hath performed; he hath paid our debt, & cancelled the

Col. 2. Bond, and taken away the Hand-writing that was against us. Now this only remaineth for us, that we have a good inclination and a willing minde to performe our duty, & labor to the utmost of our strength so to do; seeing & bewailing our manifold imperfections, errors, & failings in every one of our services: which if we can doe, God will be as wel pleased with us through his beloved Sonne, as if we had kept the whole Law, without any declining frō it at all, either to the right hand, or to the left, that which is spoken in the matter of comunicating unto the necessities of the Saints, in the Epistle to the *Corinths*,

2 Cor. 8. 12. (to wit, *if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a mā hath, & not according to that he hath not*) holds as true in al other services; that we are accepted with the Lord, according as we are inwardly affected, albeit our actions be not answerable to our desires: For he that hath a ready mind to doe what he can, and doth the same, would be as ready to doe a great

great deale more, if his abilitie did serve: And therefore the Lord will shew his gracious acceptance of that which is done by him, though it be never so little, as well as if it had beene a matter of farre greater worth.

Now that the true purpose and intent of the heart, is that which God principally regardeth in his Servants, may bee made yet more cleere by examples taken out of the Scriptures. We may read in *Genesis*, what God saith of *Abraham*: *By my selfe have I sworne (saith the Lord) because thou hast done this thing, and not spared thine onely Sonne, therefore I will surely blesse thee.* And yet *Isaac* was not slaine; But *Abraham* withdrew his hand from him, and spared him: Yet because he was content to kill him, and made all things ready for the sacrificing of him; God accounted it as good, and rewarded it as well, as if he had killed him indeed. Gen. 22. 16. 17

So *David* had but a purpose to build the Temple; which worke was afterward laid upon *Salomon*, and by him performed: Yet the Lord giveth him a good testimony, and a large reward for his readinesse that way: Hee was content to spare him, because he had beene at great paines before, in shedding the bloud of many enemies of the Church, and some remained yet still to be subdued by him: Yet this he telleth him for his comfort, *Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto my Name, thou didst well that thou wast so minded.* And besides this, he bidden *Nathan* to carry him this message, that *the Lord would build him an house, and would raise up his seed after him*, and imploy his Son in that honourable service of building an house unto the Name of the Lord, and that *he would establish his Throne for ever.* And there is reason why God should accept of the will as well as of the deed: For, 1 Chron. 17. 2 King. 8. 18. 1 Chro. 17. 10, 11, 12.

1 First, Why doe we thinke he will have regard unto the deed? Because it is his owne worke: And is not the will his worke as well as the deed? That is most certaine: For the Apostle saith to the *Philippians*, *It is God that worketh in you, both the will, and the deed, of his good pleasure.* And therfore if we can beleeve that hee is pleased with our good actions, wee may bee as well perswaded that hee is delighted with *Reason.* 1 Phil. 2. 13.

good motions, and holy desires that are stirred up in our hearts by his owne good Spirit.

Another reason why God taketh such small things in good worth, is, because hee is both in Name and Nature a Father, yea, & an heavenly Father, and therfore hath *compassion of those that fear him, even as an earthly Father hath of his child that serveth him.* Now he that is a mercifull, and wise, and loving Father (as those will ever be most mercifull to others, that have tasted most of Gods mercy to themselves) when he seeth that his Child doth as well as he can, though it bee but simply and poorely, yet he will shew his liking of it, and commend him for it: And so will God deale with us; though we cannot do things perfectly, yet if we do them obediently, he wil shew his love and approbation of us & of our workes. When a little Childe doth cheerefully ayme and shoot at the Marke which his Father proposeth unto him, though by reason of his weakenesse he shoot very wide and short; yet it is as well accepted of his Father, as if he did hit the white: And the like fatherly dealing shall we finde in God: That if we be faithfull in a little, he will esteeme of us, as if wee performed a great deale more. Indeed when we have put off the Image of the first *Adam*, and have put on the Image of the second *Adam*, and have changed the Earth for Heaven, then we shall not only obey truly, but perfectly: But here it is in truth (and so it must be esteemed) one degree of perfection, to see our owne imperfections. And that was in *Nehemiah*, and in those of his time: *O Lord, I beseech thee, let thine eare now hearken to the prayer of thy Servant, and to the prayer of thy Servants, who desire to feare thy Name.* He could not say, they did so feare his Name as they should; but this they could say, that they desired to doe it better; which desire was a Fruit of the Grace it selfe.

Psal. 113. Mal. 3. 17.

Note.

The perfection of a Christian here.

Neh. 1. 11.

Vse. This should instruct and incourage us still to be doing in the services and workes of God.

Objection. Oh, but we finde many imperfections, and many wants, and weaknesses in our selves.

Answer. What of that? If we ayme at perfection, and have respect

to

to euery commandement of God, and come as neere the Marke as we can, the Lord will accept us according to that we have, and not reject us for that we have not. If we could obey perfectly, to what end were Christ his obedience? And if God should looke after none, but those that can fully please him in all things, he should be a Lord, and a Master, without Subjects, and Servants. *If thou, O Lord* (saith *David*) *shouldest marke what is done amisse, who should stand?* Psal. 130. 3.

Therefore though wee cannot pray with that feeling, heare and reade with that profit, sing Psalmes with that joyfulnesse and cheerefulnesse of heart, as we should: Though we cannot forgive our enemies, long for Christ his comming, have such a tender feeling of the afflictions of the Saints, nor attaine to such heavenly Meditations, night or day, as we doe desire, and as God doth command; yet let us not be discouraged: If wee strive to bring our wicked Flesh to the performance of these duties, and though we have much adoe with it, yet if we draw it as a Beare to the Stake, unto Gods worship, and to the performance of good duties in publike and private: And when we feele most backwardnesse and untowardnesse in our Nature, yet wee consent in our very Soules, that the Law of God is holy, and good, and just; And that our wils and affections are indeed very corrupt, and rebellious; but wee would rather than all the World, that things went otherwise with us: That sinne might bee subdued, and grace planted in stead thereof: And it is our continuall griefe, that God should be so gracious, and kinde, and liberall to us, and we can be no more obedient, and loyall, and serviceable unto him: If (I say) we finde such a heart within us, we need not be dismayed, but may cheerfully go on, with full perswasion and undoubted resolution, that the Lord will be mercifull unto us, and take our obedience in good worth. Rom. 7.

Onely that wee may not deceive our selves, let us bee evermore carefull to use the meanes whereby we may grow better; and avoid the meanes whereby wee may bee made worse. (As was more largely taught in the former Sermon, in the end of the third *Doctrine*.) For if one say that hee desireth

sireth Heaven, and yet will never frequent Sermons, nor good Company, where hee may be instructed: nor use any privare, or publike Exercises of Religion, whereby hee may be edified; he is no more to be regarded, than a sluggard that pretendeth that he meanes to have a good crop, and yet will neither manure, nor plow, nor sowe his Ground; but when others are labouring, hee is sleeping, or loytering: As no man will ever looke that the one should have a plentifull harvest of Corne; so will no wise man beleeve that the other shall obtaine a plentifull crop, either of Grace here, or Glory hereafter.

[*Ye shall eat the good things of the Land.*] Before hath been shewed, that all Sinners that repent, shall have the Bloud of Christ to wash and cleanse their soules: Now in these words is declared, that they shall not onely have spirituall Grace, but also right unto, and the right use of all the benefits of this life. Whence this doctrine may be gathered: That,

Doct. 10. True obedience brings outward prosperity.

True obedience to Gods Commandements, though it bee not perfect, brings the blessing of God upon us for outward things, as well as for inward.

Deut. 28. 1, 2. &c.

This is promised in *Deuteronomy*, where *Moses* speaketh thus unto the People of *Israel*, *If thou shalt obey diligently the voyce of the Lord thy God, and observe and do all his commandements, which I command thee this day, then the Lord thy God will set thee on high, above all the Nations of the Earth. And all these blessings shall come on thee, &c. Blessed shalt thou be in the City, and blessed also in the Field, &c.* And so hee goes on shewing that true and faithfull obedience is that which bringeth all manner of blessings for Body and Soule, for name and estate, yea, and for Seed and Posterity also: And therefore

1 Tim. 6. & 4. the Apostle telleth *Timothy*, that *godlinesse is great gaine, and that it hath the promises of this life, and of the life to come*: In

Psal. 37. 25. which regard, *David* saith, *I have beene young, and now am old, yet I saw never the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread.* He had seene (and so may we) that Children of Great men have broken forth into many horrible sinnes, and so have been brought to a strange, and miserable, and violent death,

and

and to many wofull ſtraits and extremities before their death: But he never ſaw (neither ſhall we ſee) the godly Seed of Godly men, forſaken of God and Men, and left as Vagabonds to begge their bread: But God hath ever had (and ſtill will have) a ſpeciall care of them, and ever made all neceſſary proviſion for them: Either he himſelfe by a more particular providence of his, caſteth ſufficiency of theſe outward things upon them; or bleſſeth their labours, ſo that they are made a meanes of maintenance unto them: Or if they faile that way, he moveth the hearts of ſome or other of his Servants, to pitty them, and to ſupply their wants: So that whatſoever their neceſſities be, they are freed from that Curſe that is denounced againſt the Seed of the wicked, to wit, that they ſhould wander up and downe as Vagrants, begging their bread, and making a trade of that vile wretched courſe of life. Pſal.109.10.

And there is a cauſe why we ſhould reſt fully reſolved of this point, that none of Gods houſhold ſhall ever want neceſſarie reliefe. *Reaſon.* Becauſe all will yeeld that God is the Governour of Heaven and Earth, and the diſpoſer of all things in them both: And then they muſt grant further, that thoſe that are beſt, and do beſt, ſhall ſpeed beſt; becauſe God loveth them moſt: And how then can we make queſtion, whether or no, the Lord will beſtow upon them a competent meaſure, and a comfortable uſe of theſe earthly bleſſings, ſeeing all is in his hand, and he wiſhes ſo well unto his owne People? Eſpecially ſeeing he hath ſtraitly charged us, *Not to care what we ſhall eate, or drinke, or what we ſhall put on: but firſt to ſeeke the kingdome of God and his righteouſneſſe, promiſing us faithfully that if we do ſo, all other things ſhall be caſt upon us.* Mat.6.25.

And as he hath promiſed this, ſo hath he from time to time performed it: As we may obſerve thorow-out the Booke of *Judges*, of *Samuel*, and of the *Chronicles*: For there it is to be ſeene, that when godlineſſe proſpered in the Soules of Gods People, they proſpered in their outward eſtate: And when ſinne (on the other ſide) had made havocke in their Soules, then the *Madianites*, and the *Philiſtims*, and other

Enemies, made havocke in their Countrey: When they and their Kings thrived in piety, and did grow in the knowledge of God, and zeale of his glory, then it went well with them for outward plenty and abundance: But when Idolatry and Impiety began once to thrive in their hearts, and in their Land, they never had long, nor setled prosperity, but their enemies Hands and Swords prevailed against them for the taking away of their lives, and the ruinating of their estates.

Vse 1. Here is matter of terrour for all wicked Worldlings, that thinke to advantage and advance themselves by sinfull and

Prov. 10.2. naughty courses: that is an ill way to rise: For, *the riches of Iniquity shall not prosper*. Though they build their houses never so high, and advance their nests unto the Starres, yet the Lords hand shall pull them thence, and cast them downe into the very dust. They thinke their Houses, their Names, and their Substance shall remaine for ever, and that they shall make themselves and theirs, by joyning House to House, and Land to Land; by oppressing the poore and needy, and by defrauding the fatherlesse and the widow, and such as cannot right themselves. But alas, they little consider in the meane while, that God is the Iudge of the World, and that he will reward every man according to his workes. They imagine their Estate shall be according to their Wealth: And so it might be indeed, if God were not the Governour of the World: But sith he is so, it shall go with every one according to that he is, and not according to that he hath. And therefore as God would have it proclaimed to the Godly;

Isay 3.10. *Say ye, Surely it shall go well with the just, for they shall eate the fruit of their works.* So he would have this denounced against the Vngodly, *Woe be to the wicked: it shall be evill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him.* They shall reape that which they have sowed. It were an absurd thing for one that hath sowne nothing but Cockle and Fitches, to expect a good crop of Wheat, or Barley, or such like Corne: And as contrary to all reason is it for them that sow iniquitie, to thinke they shall reape any thing but affliction. They may delude themselves with vaine hopes and bragges as much

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as they will: But do we thinke ſuch proud, and malicious, and cruell men, ſhall obtaine any happineſſe, and proſperity from the Lord? Nay ſurely, he hateth both them and their practiſes, and therefore they and their wicked Seed ſhall be rooted out: As we may ſee it verified in many of the Kings of *Iſrael*, as in *Jeroboam*, *Ahab*, *Baaſha*, &c. and moſt notably in that place of *Jeremy* concerning *Jehoiakim* the ſonne of *Joſiah*: *Woe unto him* (ſaith the Lord) *that buildeth his Houſe by unrighteouſneſſe, and his Chambers without equity: He uſeth his neighbour without wages, and giveth him not for his worke, &c. Shalt thou raigne becauſe thou cloſeſt thy ſelfe in Cedar? Did not thy Father, eate, and drinke, and proſper, when he executed judgement, and juſtice?* &c. Where is declared, in the example of *Joſiah*, the godly Father on the one ſide, that the true knowledge of God, and the practiſe of godlineſſe, and of righteouſneſſe, bringeth all true honour and proſperitie: And on the other ſide, in the example of *Jehoiakim*, the wicked Sonne, is ſhewed, that impietie joyned with oppreſſion and cruelty, with fraud, and deceit, and injurious dealing, doth bring the curſe of God in life and death: That it maketh a man live a baſe and diſhonourable life, and dye a ſhamefull and ignominious death: That while he is in the World, he ſhall live undeſired: And when he goeth out of the World he ſhall dye unlamented. Ier. 22. 13, &c.

Vſe 2. This is alſo for our inſtruction; If we would have the good things of the Land, and eate of the ſame, that is, have the comfortable uſe and enjoyment thereof, then let us yeeld our free conſent to be dutifull and obedient to the Lord. Otherwiſe a man may have the things of this life, and yet not have his part in them: He may have much meat and drinke, apparell, and riches, and honour, and yet have no ſound comfort in any of them all. A poore man that feareth God, though he feed on coarſe bread, on greene hearbes, or on pulſe, as *Daniel* and his Companions did, yet may receive his food more chearfully, and looke a great deale more freſhly, than wicked unregenerate men do, or can do, when they have all abundance and variety.

Therefore let this encourage men, if they would have good things either in right, or in poſſeſſion, to labour to get Religion into their hearts: and to be as much afraid of ſinne, as of miſerie: and as deſirous of grace, as they are of proſperitie. Which if we could do, we ſhould finde Gods eyes open to conſider of us, and his hand to relieve us continually in all our wants and neceſſities.

And as we ſhould be thus carefull for our ſelves, ſo we ſhould be alſo for our children. There is no good Parent but would wiſh his children might be provided for, and live in the World in good ſort: Now here is the way to purchaſe them a good eſtate in the Earth: Vſe the meanes to bring them unto the feare of God, and to have faith in God: For when the Lions that are full of might, and rage, and crueltie, do *lacke and ſuffer hunger*; *Then they whith ſeeke the Lord,* Pſal. 34.10. *ſhall want nothing that is good.* God will have a care that his Sheepe ſhall have convenient paſture, and be in good liking, though the Lions be pined and hunger-ſtarved; and when ſtrong and mighty men are in miſery and debt, in want and neceſſity, ever ſhifting and toyling, and yet getting nothing: Then Gods poore and weake Servants ſhall have that which Heb.13.15. will ſatisfie and content them: For God hath ſaid, that *he will never leave them nor forſake them.* Therefore are they the moſt provident and wiſe Parents, that bring up their children in the inſtruction and information of the Lord: For ſuch *ſhall poſſeſſe* Pſal.37.11. *the earth; and the generation of the righteous ſhall be bleſſed.* Children are not alwayes the better for the goods of their Parents, but they are alwayes the better for their goodneſſe: For Pſal. 112.2. when it is ſaid in that 112. *Pſalme* that *they are bleſſed*, it is more than if it had beene ſaid, they ſhall enjoy honour, credit, wealth, and whatſoever outward bleſſings elſe can be named: For that implyeth thus much; that they ſhall have the good gifts of God ſo farre as they are needfull for them, and that they ſhall have the right uſe of them.

Objection. The wicked flourish. But this may ſeeme quite contrary: For commonly wicked and profane perſons live in all manner of plenty, when the godly ſuſtaine penury and ſcarcity: And therefore in

appearance, godlineſſe is not the beſt courſe to procure a happy and proſperous eſtate.

For the removing of this doubt, we muſt conſider, that howſoever the wicked of the world ſeeme to thrive beſt, and to enjoy great matters, in compariſon of that which good Chriſtians have; yet in truth their caſe is nothing ſo good as is the caſe of Gods Servants, but in the midſt of all the things that they poſſeſſe, they are very miſerable: for, *Anſw.*

1 Firſt, they have right to nothing, but are meere Theeves and uſurpers, and ſhall anſwer for laying hold of thoſe things that are in truth none of their owne. A Thiefe may breake into the Kings Treaſurie, yet it is none of his, but he ſhall quickly be thruſt out thence: And ſo may a Moth creepe into a velvet gowne, yet hath it no right there, but may be bruſht out at the owners pleaſure: And the ſame is the caſe of all unregenerate perſons; they are intruders into other mens poſſeſſions, and the great Landlord of the World may thruſt them forth when it ſeemeth beſt unto himſelfe, and call them to a reckoning for medling with thoſe things that they could lay no lawfull claime unto, by any one Clauſe or Title that is contained in Gods Law. They have right to nothing. Iob 27. 18.

2 Secondly, as they have no right to have any thing; ſo neither have they any comfortable uſe thereof. *There is no peace to the wicked, ſaith my God.* But *they are like the raging waves of the Sea, that cannot reſt*, but are ſtill toſſed to and fro, from one ſide to another; and caſt up filthy mire and durt. And when they are moſt lowd in their laughter, and ſeeme to be moſt pleaſant and merrie, even then their mirth is full of hollowneſſe and diſcontentedneſſe: For let them but have ſome apprehenſion of death, or of any ſudden and extraordinary judgement likely to befall them: nay, let them be but a little croſſed, and diſgraced by any of their Companions, they will be ſuddenly diſtempered, and much daunted, and many times fall a trembling, every joynt of them, as *Belſhazzar* King of *Babel* did at the ſight of the Hand-writing on the wall. And if no ſuch thing do betide them, yet they are ſtill purſued by ſuch Enemies, as will ſuffer them They have the right uſe of nothing. Iſa. 57. 20. Dan. 5. 6.

them to have no great quietneſſe, nor comfort in the things of this preſent life which they do poſſeſſe. If wee ſhould ſee a Bucke hunted through a greene paſture, where there is much freſh graſſe, and many ſweet and pleaſant flowers, and ſprings of water: we would not thinke his caſe very happy, nor that he had any great inheritance there, when wee perceived the Hounds following cloſe at his heeles: Yet ſuch is the ſtate of all ſinners, that have a large and pleaſant walke in this world, they are ſtill hunted with many noyſome luſts, of covetouſnes, and pride, and filthineſſe, and the like: and Satan & the world have them ever in chaſe, and ſhall purſue them ſtill, till they have driven them into Hell it ſelfe, if they alter not their prophane and wretched courſe of life.

Gods curſe is upon all.

3 Further, they have the wrath of God lying on their Bodies and Soules, which poyſoneth and invenometh all that belongeth unto them. His terrible and unavoydable curſe ſhall ever cloſe with ſinners: So that though they eate and drinke, and wallow in their pleaſures, yet they can finde no ſound delight; nor turne contentment therein: Becauſe being poſſeſſed with hardneſſe of heart, and blindneſſe of minde, and being given up to a reprobate ſenſe, all things that they have are imbittered by their owne ſinne, and Gods heavy curſe cleaving unto them.

Put caſe all a mans bones were broken, and one ſhould put on him a Velvet coat, beſet with pearles and diamonds, in the moſt rich and coſtly manner that might bee: And he ſhould begin to think, and ſay, Now I truſt I ſhall be at eaſe, and ſhall have no more cauſe of complaint: Every wiſe man would ſee his folly, and teſtifie againſt him, that his rich attire cannot take away, nor abate his paines: Even ſo fareth it with the ungodly: Sinne hath ſet them out of joynt; nay, it hath ſo wrought on all the powers, and parts of Soule and Body, that it hath, as it were, cruſht all their bones in pieces: and what ſound peace, reſt, or comfort can they finde, from all theſe outward things of the world that are caſt upon them, till there be ſome cure wrought on their Soules.

But it is quite contrary with Gods children: though they

be preſſed, and pinched with many diſtreſſes and wants, and driven to many extremities and ſtraits, yet they may be fuller of joy in the midſt of their afflictions, than the wicked are in the midſt of their jollity. *Paul* and *Silas* were fuller of gladneſſe, and of true contentedneſſe in the Dungeon, when their feet were faſt in the Stocks, than *Herod* was on his Throne, having all his Flatterrers and Sycophants abont him, to extoll and magnifie him. The very teares of the people of God, are ſweeter and more comfortable, than the greateſt joy of carnall and wretched ſinners: For the Lord is with his in mercy and goodneſſe; whereas his face is bent againſt the wicked and impenitent: And hence it is, *That a little that the righteous hath, is better than great riches of the ungodly*. Better is a dinner of greene hearbes ſeaſoned with the bleſſings of God, than many dainty diſhes, poyſoned with Gods wrath and malediction. Act. 16. *Note.* Pſal. 37.

And albeit, the Saints of God be ſometimes deprived of theſe tranſitory things; yet they ſhall never be deprived of Gods favour: and that want of outward things ſhall be ſupplyed with inward graces. They have a ſure promiſe, that they ſhall have ſufficient: and God never giveth leſſe than he promiſeth, but many times he giveth more than we expect. And if that which is wanting in droſſe be paid home in good gold we need not to complaine, as if we were loſers by ſuch an exchange. Therefore let us ſhut up all with that ſaying of *Solomon: Walke thou in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous: For the juſt ſhall dwell in the Land, and the upright men ſhall remaine in it. But the wicked ſhall bee cut off from the Earth, and the tranſgreſſours ſhall be rooted out of it. But if ye refuſe, and be rebellious, ye ſhall be devoured by the Sword.* This maketh for the preventing of a third objection. For ſome might ſay, it were good indeed in theſe regards, if we could repent for our ſinnes, and waſh our ſelves from our filthineſſe: but if we do not, we hope we ſhall do well enough while we live, and be ſaved when we dye: for God is not ſo ſevere as men would make him, but he is gracious and mercifull: and therefore we meane to take our courſe, and ſtill to proceed in the ſame, and yet I truſt to ſpeed as well as the beſt Pro. 2. 20. &c. *Objection.*

of them. Nay (saith the Prophet) do not so: for *if ye refuse to obey, and be rebellious, ye shall be devoured by the sword.* As if he had said, God indeed is ready to forgive, & to cleanse all sorts of sinners, that see how and wherein they have offended, and are troubled for their offences, resolving to leave and forsake them, and to practise the contrary duties: but they that refuse to obey, and continue in their obstinacy, the Lord will never forgive them, nor purge them from their iniquities: but their sinnes shall cleave as fast unto their Soules, as the Dye doth unto crimson, or scarlet, that can never by any art, or strength of man be reduced to their former whitenesse againe.

Answ.

And therefore the Prophet telleth them, *if ye refuse to obey, ye shall be devoured by the Sword:* It is sure some fearefull and strange plague or other shall fall upon you, and utterly consume you. As God hath mercy in abundance for penitent sinners: so hath he judgements in as great plenty for obstinate Rebels, that refuse to submit themselves unto him.

Now the things before spoken of (both blessings and favours promised to the penitent, and plagues and punishments denounced against the obstinate) he confirmeth by one main argument; *The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.* As if he should have said, Let men never discourse, nor object on the one side, or on the other: For God hath said it, and he will do it. He is true, and cannot lye; he is wise, and cannot change: he is just, and cannot be corrupted: he is Almighty, and cannot be resisted: and therefore, whatsoever his mouth hath spoken, that his hand will bring to passe.

Doct. 11.

Vse 1.

Ioh 6. 56.

Hath God then said, *Whosoever eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternall life, and I will raise him up at the last day?* Then is it impossible that such should ever taste of Gods wrath, or sustaine the punishment of eternall death.

Objection.

Oh, but Christ is in heaven, and we are on earth, and how can we then eat his Body, and drinke his Blood?

Answ.

Faith hath a long and a high reach, and the Spirit of Christ hath as great a reach, to convey the same unto us: and our communion with him is not carnall, but spirituall.

Objection.

Oh, but having so many corruptions and rebellions, as I have, how is it possible that I should be cleansed?

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The mouth of the Lord hath ſpoke it: and therefore never cavill againſt it, nor make queſtion of it any more. Indeed unbeliefe cannot ſee how this ſhould be effected: and therefore ignorant unbelieving Papiſts have invented a carnall manner of eating and drinking the Body and Bloud of Chriſt: And have found out a Purgatory to ſcowre off that ruſt of ſin that hath ſo eaten into mens Soules: But all ſuch devices, for the waſhing away of ſinne, are but as muddy water, that will not make us one whit cleaner, but rather foule us a great deale more. Gods meanes onely are effectuall to make us cleane and pure in his eyes, and able to ſtand with boldneſſe before him, with all comfort and perfect joy. *Answer.*

On the contrary, this is for the terror of thoſe that have their conſciences ſo feared, through long cuſtome in ſinning, that notwithſtanding all the threatnings denounced againſt preſumptuous ſinners, they do continue ſtill in their idleneſſe, their prophanes, and all kind of wickednes: Let them goe on, and let them walke in the waies of their owne hearts, and follow their owne counſels, and their carnall and wretched deſires: but withall let them know, that for all theſe things God will bring them to judgement. And if ignorance will not wholly excuſe men; but that they ſhall bee puniſhed for their offences: Then how many and how grievous ſhall their ſtripes be, that know their Maſters will and do it not? Surely if Chriſt ſhall come in *flaming fire to render vengeance to thoſe that do not know him*: much more will he come in wrath and indignation againſt thoſe that do know, & yet will not obey the Goſpell. But as for thoſe that ſee their infirmities, and daily lament, and grieve for them, and ſtrive againſt them: Let ſuch be of good comfort; for their painfull labor is known unto the Lord; and their earneſt deſire of faith, and love, and repentance, is a grace well pleaſing to his Majeſty: And they ſhall not onely finde mercy for the pardon of their ſinnes, and grace for the ſanctifying of their ſoules; but outward bleſſings for the upholding of their eſtates: *For the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it.* *Vſe 2.* Eccleſ. 11. 9. 2 Theſ. 1. 8. Revel 2. 2.

FINIS.

THE FOVRTH SERMON.

2 CHRON. 30. 18, 19, 20.

Verse 18. *The good Lord be mercifull toward him,*

19 *That prepareth his whole heart to seeke the Lord God of his Fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the Sanctuary.*

20 *And the Lord heard Hezekiah, and healed the People.*

IN the former part of this Chapter, is declared, how king *Hezekiah*, in a zeale of Gods glory, and love unto his people, made a proclamation thorowout all *Israel*, from *Beersheba* even unto *Dan*, that they should come to keep the Passeover to the Lord God of *Israel*, at *Jerusalem*: For they had not done it for a great time, in that manner as God required, because of that Idolatry which had overspread the Land of *Israel*. For this purpose *Hezekiah* and his Princes sent Posts with Letters thorowout all *Israel* and *Iudah*, even to the ten Tribes also, that were full of sin and misery, to admonish them to turne againe unto the Lord their God, that he might returne unto them: and not to be stiffe-necked, but to humble themselves to serve the Lord, that his wrath might be turned away from them. But when the Messengers came, a great sort of the *Israelites* laught them to scorne, and mocked them: they were so inured unto sin, and infected with Idolatry, that they set light by, nay, utterly contemned, all the wholsome and holy exhortations of that worthy King and his Nobles.

Yet some of them whose hearts God touched, even divers

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out of the Tribes of *Asher*, and *Manasseh*, and *Zebulun*, came to *Ierusalem*: and the hand of God was in *Iudah*, so that hee gave them one heart to doe the commandement of the King, and of the Rulers: insomuch that there assembled unto *Ierusalem* much people, to keepe the Feast of Vnleavened Bread.

But by reason of the short warning that they had, a multitude of the people of *Ephraim*, and *Manasseh*, *Issachar*, and *Zabulun* had not cleansed themselves according to the Law in that behalfe provided, *Exod.* 12. *Numb.* 9. and therefore were in danger to be cut off, *Levit.* 7. 20.

In this regard they were in great distresse, and in a sore strait, yet they thought it better to receive the Sacrament, though they failed in some circumstances of their preparation, than to omit it until the next yeere, having wanted it so long before, whereupon they adventured to eat the Passeover: which being ended, *Hezekiah*, in feare of Gods displeasure, and in commiseration of the people that stood in danger of Gods plagues and punishments, falleth to prayer for them, and is instant with the Lord in that behalfe: Hee saw their great desire to be made partakers of it; the paines that they had taken to come unto *Ierusalem* for that very purpose, and perceived a strange hand of God inclining their hearts so farre, and thereby was he incouraged to become an earnest suiter to God for them: And thus he prayed unto God for them: *The good Lord be mercifull vnto him that prepareth his whole heart to seeke the Lord God of his Fathers.* The word that is translated [*be mercifull.*] signifieth thus much in effect, as if hee had said, The good Lord pardon and supply that which is wanting in him that prepareth his whole heart. And now they wanted not so much willingnesse, as time to prepare themselves; and therefore he prayeth the Lord to be favourable unto them. And that hee might have more assurance that his prayer should be effectuall, he buildeth it upon strong and sound reasons taken,

1 First, from the Nature of God, implyed in the word [*good.*] which goodnesse of his, is never seene so much as in shewing of mercy to them that are in distresse. As if he should

have

have ſaid, Lord, thou art good in thy ſelfe, and good unto thy People, and here are ſuch as ſtand in great need of thy goodneſſe, and therfore be mercifull and gracious unto them.

2 Secondly, from the Name of God [*Iehovah*] implying his conſtancy and unchangeableneſſe in himſelfe, and in his love, and the fruits thereof toward his Servants. *Hezekiah* knew that he had bin mercifull unto as great ſinners as they were, in former times, and that hee was the ſame God ſtill, and therefore he intreateth him now to manifeſt ſo much, in paſſing by the frailties of theſe communicants.

3 *Verſe 19.* 3 A third reaſon is taken from the Covenant, that hee is [*the God of their Fathers*] by reaſon whereof hee was bound unto them, and their Children; ſo that he could not deny them any thing that they ſhould aske in Faith. Theſe arguments are drawne from God.

Verſe 19. Another argument there is taken from them, that *they ſought the Lord, &c.* Which ſeeking of theirs, is ſet out by the manner of it, that they *prepared their whole heart* to ſeeke him: Not as if their hearts were ſo free from ſinne, or ſo full of grace as they ſhould have beene; but that they were true and plaine, and ſincere: Not ſuch as had no ſinne (for it is ſaid; *they were not cleanſed according to the purification of the Sanctuary*) but that did love no ſinne: Not ſuch hearts as wanted no grace, or preparation for Gods ordinance: But ſuch as were humbled for the want of grace, and of that preparation that they ſhould have made.

Verſe 20. This was his prayer, with the reaſons of it: The effect followeth. *And the Lord heard Hezekiah*; that is, ſo heard him, as that he accepted and performed his requeſt: For it is ſaid, *he healed the people*; that is, gave them that which God doth offer unto his people in the Sacrament: They received the Seale of the Covenant, and he made good the Covenant unto them, as ſhall be ſhewed afterwards more plainely and particularly, in the ſeverall branches thereof.

The ſumme then of theſe words is: The godly care of *Hezekiah* for thoſe that came in part unprepared unto the Paſſeover. And here we may conſider:

1 What

1 What hee did, he prayed for them: where wee may note,
  1 The ſubſtance of his prayer, to wit, that God of his rich mercy would ſupply all their wants.
  2 The perſons for whom he prayeth: who are deſcribed,
    1 By their ſincerity, that they were ſuch as feared God, and ſought him with their whole heart.
    2 By their infirmitie, that they wanted the legall cleanſing.
2 The effect that followed upon his prayer, which was twofold:
  God 1 Heard his prayer.
  2 Healed the people.

Ver. 19. [*The good Lord be mercifull*] In that *Hezekiah* being appointed by God to be governour, taketh this courſe of ſeeking to the Lord for his people, we may from his example learne this Doctrine: That it is the duty of all Governours and Superiours, not onely to teach them that belong unto their charge, and depend any way upon them; but likewiſe to pray for them.

Doct. 1. Prayer to be joyned with inſtruction.

Good Rulers muſt not onely informe thoſe that are under them, what they muſt doe, and ſtir them to good duties, by wholeſome inſtructions: but they muſt alſo become ſuiters to the Lord for them, that he would frame their hearts to doe as they are taught; and to pardon them where they come ſhort.

It was well done of *Hezekiah*, to ſend abroad Meſſengers to call the *Iſraelites* to the worſhip of God: but this hee knew was not enough, and therefore he beſeecheth the good Lord to ſhew himſelfe favourable unto them. Thus alſo dealt *David* (another King placed over Gods inheritance.) *Be favourable unto Zion, for thy good pleaſure,* (ſaith hee) *build the walls of Ieruſalem.* And ſo did *Moſes*, that worthy Governor of the Lords people: not contenting himſelfe to bee often teaching and inſtructing them whom he had the charge of: but ever and anon praying for them, as occaſion was offered, that God would relieve them when they were in wants: that he would defend them, when they were ſet upon by enemies: that he would pardon them, when they had kindled his wrath againſt them, &c. The like is noted of *Iob*, how carefull hee

Pſal. 15. 18.

was for his children, even when they were, in a sort, from under his shadow, and had houses of their owne to dwell in; for it is said, that his sonnes went and *banquetted in their houses every one his day, &c. and when the dayes of their banquetting were gone about, Iob sent, and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, & offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: For* Iob *thought, it may be that my sons have sinned, and blasphemed God in their hearts, thus did* Iob *every day.* Here we must understand, when it is said that *he offered* Sacrifices for them, that he prayed for them also, (for those two, sacrificing, and praying, ever went together) that God would pardon them all their sins which they had committed, while they were at their feasting merry together; at which times, many faults escape yong people, which they take little notice of: but *Iob* considered throughly of them, & was ever mindful and carefull to use the meanes of God for the remitting and purging away of the same; that his childrens soules might not be infected, nor Gods anger provoked thereby. A rare example, worthy the imitation of all godly Parents, yet imitated but of a very few: for how small is the number of them that are thus jealous, and fearefull of themselves? and if they faile of this godly care for their owne soules, how can they be jealous, with a godly jealousie, of the soules of those whom God hath committed unto their charge? Now the reasons why we must be as ready to speake to God in prayer, as to them in precepts, are these:

Iob 1.4.5.

More.

Reasons.

1 First, because God hath commanded to *pray one for another.* Now if those that are not tied unto us by any neere bonds, are to bee recommended unto God in our prayers; much more those whom God hath more especially united unto us, either by nature, or by duty and service, on their part to be performed unto us, Yea, Christ Iesus straitly commandeth us *to pray for our enemies.* Now if that be a bounden duty; how much more is it to pray for our friends, especially, if withall they bee Gods friends? seeing they by our prayers may bee much helped, and without them much indangered.

1 Iam. 5.16. Gods command. Matth. 5.44.

The Prophet *Samuel* understood that this was a duty, when he accounted the neglect hereof to be a sinne against God, as

in

In that booke it appeareth that he did; for when the people were frighted and humbled, both by the words of *Samuel*, & by the miraculous worke of God, in ſending extraordinary thunder and raine in the time of wheat harveſt: and therupon came unto *Samuel*, ſaying, *Pray for thy ſervants unto the Lord thy God, that we dye not:* his anſwer was, *God forbid, that I ſhould ſinne againſt the Lord, and ceaſe praying for you.* 1 Sam. 12. 19. *Verſe* 23.

A ſecond reaſon is, becauſe except they joyne petitions unto God, with inſtructions unto them, they can looke for no great bleſſing upon the good leſſons they give unto them. All planting and watering is in vaine, except God give the increaſe: and if we would have any increaſe, it is good reaſon we ſhould ſeeke it at his hand by prayer. Therefore both of them muſt be joyned together: we muſt doe the beſt we can, and then ſay, as *Noah* did, *Lord, perſwade* Iapheth *to dwell in the Tents of* Sem. Except the Lord did perſwade the heart, as well as *Noah* did the eare, he knew all that he could doe, was but loſt labour. 2 No bleſſing to be expected without prayer. 1 Cor. 3. 6. 7. Geu. 9. 27.

Thirdly, unleſſe they pray for a bleſſing, they can never be ſo thankfull for any good that is wrought upon ſuch as are under them. They have had no hand in pulling downe Gods mercies upon them, and therfore they haue no heart to give him praiſe for the ſame, but when any Governour or Superiour hath had a ſtrong hand in drawing downe the mercies of God upon any that depend upon him, and ſeeth the good effect of his prayers; and of his teares, this cannot but make him glorifie and magnifie the Lords goodneſſe, for hearing and granting their requeſts, in remooving evill things, or beſtowing good things upon ſuch as are under their juriſdiction. 3 No thankfulneſſe, unleſſe that have gone before.

This ſerveth for the reproofe of thoſe that thinke they have done as much as they needs, and ſufficiently diſcharged their conſciences, if they have called their children, & ſervants, and whole Family to the Word & Sacrament, and to be examined before they receive the ſame; though in the meane while they never call on the Name of the Lord to bleſſe them, and the meanes; and to be good and gracious unto them where they failed in preparing themſelves. When *Iacob* was to ſend his ſonnes into *Egypt* to buy food of *Joſeph*, he prayed inſtantly that *Vſe.* For Superiors.

that God would vouchsafe to be with them, to give them pro-
Gen. 43. 14. sperous and good successe in the businesse they went about;
God Almightie give you mercy (saith he) *in the sight of the man.*
Now if he thought it his duty to pray for them, when they
were to come before *Ioseph*, which was but Vnder-gover-
nour in *Ægypt*: how much more should we count it our duty
to pray for such as belong unto our charge, when they are to
come before the whole Trinity; even before that God that is
the Soveraigne Lord and King of heaven and earth, full of glo-
ry, and full of majesty: how much more (I say) should we de-
sire, that they might finde favour in his eyes? especially consi-
dering that *Iacobs* sons went but for the food of their bodies,
which they might either haue or want, without any extraor-
dinary hurt unto themselues: whereas those that are to bee
partakers of Gods ordinances, are to be suters unto him for
the food of their soules, and so bee everlastingly saved, if they
can obtaine it; or else take their bane, and be lyable to Gods
heavy displeasure, and in danger of judgement inward and
outward, in body and soule; not onely in their life time, but
for ever after, if they repent not for their disorderly, and con-
temptuous approaching unto him in his holy seruices? so that
there is much more reason, we see, that Governours should be
earnest with the Lord for the saving of the soules of those that
are under their roofe, than there was for *Iacob*, to bee earnest
for the successe of his sons: and therefore let all those bee hum-
bled and reformed, that have been slack and negligent in the
performance of this duty.

Vse 2. For inferiours. Secondly, let inferiours here be admonished, that, as gover-
nours are to sue unto the Lord in their behalfe (the husband
for the wife, parents for their children, masters, and mistresses
for their servants and people:) so they on the other side, are
to be gentle, and humble, and tractable, that their superiours
may have good incouragement, and good successe in the sup-
plications that they make for them. Wee doe not reade that
Hezekiah at any other time, dealt so earnestly with God in
the cause of the people, as at this time he did. And what mo-
ved him to bee so importunate now? even this, that hee saw
they had hearkened unto his perswasion, & taken great pains

to come to *Jerusalem* from all quarters of the Land: and being there, he perceived that they had some sorrow and remorse for their former impiety, and some desire to become better for the time to come. Now when he discerned that they came on so fast, and that they were halfe healed already, he bendeth all the force and strength of his prayers for the obtaining of mercy and favour for them, and so found that good effect that he desired and expected. And that was it that made *David* so plentifully & feelingly to poure out his heart before the Lord in prayer, and in thanksgiving: for when the Princes and the people had offered very largely, and very willingly, *David rejoyced with great joy, and blessed and praised the Lord before all the congregation, saying, Blessed be thou, O Lord God of Israel our Father for ever and ever, &c. Who am I, and who are my people, that we should offer willingly? &c. O Lord God, keep this for ever in the purposes and thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their hearts unto thee.* Thus may we observe how the good affections and desires of the people do stirre up and strengthen the hearts of their Rulers to pray for them: whereas on the contrary, nothing doth so kill the heart, and discourage the spirits of Gods servants from prayer, as when they see those that are under them, to be wilfull, and heady, froward, and rebellious, and utterly void of any good disposition unto piety, and religious exercises: They can give no good testimonie of them, but have need to cry unto God, that he would humble them, and convert them: they cannot pray as *Hezekiah* here doth, *The good Lord be mercifull unto him, that prepareth his whole heart to seeke the Lord*, &c. but the *good Lord* give them hearts to prepare themselves, and take away the stony, and unbeleeving, and carnal hearts out of their bodies. And indeed many times it is a just judgement of God upon such wretched persons, that his children should have no heart to pray for them, because (as it is said of *Eli's* sonnes) God hath a purpose to destroy them, or at least greivously to afflict them. And therefore little do these stubborne and obstinate children and servants know, what injury they do unto themselves, by entring into, and continuing in their sinfull courses: for they thereby not onely provoke Gods heavy displeasure against them,

1 Chron. 29. 9. 10. 14. 18.

Note.

them, which is a burden importable; but also hinder, & it may be utterly cut off the prayers of those that would otherwise cry unto God night and day, for the obtaining of his favour, and the procuring of the light of his countenance to shine upon them, if they might see any signe of grace and goodnesse in them. So much for the first point.

Now further mark who they be that he praieth for: not profane or careles persons, but for those that *prepared their whole heart to seek the Lord*, &c. that is, which laboured with a true and sincere heart to be partakers of the mercy and goodnes of God, which he made offer of in his holy ordinances. In that *Hezekiah* neither doth, nor dares pray for a blessing upon any, but upon such as were true-hearted; The Doctrine is: that,

Doct. 2. Sincerity requisite in all Communicants.

Whosoever would have any mercy from God in the Sacrament, must come with a sincere and upright heart thereunto. That howsoever he cannot put away all sinne (for *who can say his heart is cleane*) yet he may, and must put away the liking of all sinne, and the purpose of sinning.

So farre as any man hath a love unto iniquity, and an intent of committing iniquity, he is tainted with hypocrisie, & doth pollute and defile every good thing that he medleth withall, and so can have no benefit, but much hurt therefrom.

If then we would have God to meet us in mercy, we must meet him in sincerity: & if we would have him to come unto us in goodnes, we must draw neere unto him in uprightnesse.

Heb. 10. 22. Agreeable to this point is that exhortation to the *Heb. Let us draw neare with a true heart, in assurance of faith, sprinkled in our hearts from an evill conscience, & washed in our bodies with pure water.* As if he should have said; except you come fitted and prepared with a heart void of guile and deceit, ye offend God by your comming. For God will be so farre from giving countenance, or comfort unto such, that he will assuredly plague them for all their fraud & falshood that they have used with him. This we may plainly see in that which befell the ill grounds; there are three sorts of them mentioned (all professors) that came to the Word of life, and yet had no benefit by it: and therefore by a necessary consequent, they could reap as little fruit by the Sacrament. For the Word must give life and

Note.

strength,

ſtrength, before the Sacrament can nouriſh and increaſe the ſame. What was the reaſon why they profited not? becauſe they came not with a *good and honeſt heart*, as the fourth ſort of hearers did, who received inſtruction and comfort, and the power of godlineſſe, by the conſcionable hearing of the word. But what is that good and honeſt heart which they are commended for? it is a heart that doth fully purpoſe to do well, though it faile much in that which it performeth: that reſolveth before-hand to avoid the evill that ſhall be reproved, and to do the good duties that ſhall be commanded, & to beleeve and reſt upon the promiſes that ſhall be pronounced, as far as God ſhall give ability, &c. Now whereſoever there is ſuch a ready inclination unto goodnes, there will be a bringing forth of fruit; though not in all alike, yet every one will do ſomewhat: and God will acknowledge them for good ground, and honeſt-hearted Chriſtians, that yeeld him but a thirty fold, as well as thoſe that yeeld him ſixty fold, or an hundred fold: for a leſſe meaſure of fruitfulneſſe, is an argument of truth, as well as a greater meaſure, and therefore ſhall be reſpected and rewarded: but as for thoſe that have naughty & deceitful hearts, they ſhal go away as bad, or worſe than they came: and whatſoever faire colours they ſet upon their profeſſion for a time, yet ſooner or later their hollowneſſe ſhall appeare to their ſhame and puniſhment. Luk. 8. 15.

Now the Reaſons that make for the confirmation of this Doctrine, That if we would finde acceptance with God, we muſt bring ſincerity with us: are theſe,

Reaſon 1. Without uprightneſſe there is no removall of ſin. Pſal. 32. 1, 2, 3.

Firſt, without this, we can have neither remiſſion, nor ſanctification: and therefore are ſo farre from having intereſt in Gods mercies through Chriſt his merits, that we are liable to his wrath, and lie open to the ſtrokes of his revenging hands. None are pardoned, and bleſſed, but thoſe in *whoſe ſpirit there is no guile*.

Ioh. 9. 31. Pſal. 66. 18.

Secondly, except there be uprightneſſe, we can have no hope of good ſucceſſe in any ſervice of God that we take in hand, there being no promiſe made unto us: for as God *heareth not ſinners in prayer*, ſo he doth not helpe ſinners by the Word or Sacrament.

Vse 1. Against unprepared receivers.

This is for the terrour of those that when they come to the Lords Table, never examine themselves, nor look into the state of their soules: at most they come but with a *Pharisaicall* washing of the outside of the Cup, and of the Platter: As, if there have been, brawles betweene man and man, there shall be some idle & formal reconciliation: they will be freinds and forgive one another, before they receive the Communion; but if there be any difference betwixt God and them, they never looke to the inward parts: such can expect no blessing upon their coming, but may justly feare some grievous judgement, because their hearts are unsound & unfaithful before the Lord.

2

Secondly, sith none here have any prayer made for them, but such as bring with them to the Lords house a single and sincere heart: therefore if we would have benefit by any of the meanes of salvation, let us be sure, that though we be burdened with many corruptions, yet we seeke the Lord with an unfained desire of profiting by his ordinances. Now that we may not deceive our selves, but may satisfie our consciences in full assurance that our hearts are right toward God; let us take this direction following:

A triall of an upright heart.

1 Renouncing of sinne. Iam 5.8.9.

First, labour diligently to find out (as by searching we may) our speciall sinnes; grieve heartily for them: and put them away by true repentance. So saith *James*, *Purge your hearts ye hypocrites*: but what must be the purgation and receit which they must take? (*sorrow and weepe.*) That man and woman that hath never done so, is not onely stained with hypocrisie, but is a sinfull hypocrite. All men by nature are full of deceit and guile, and till they sit as judges upon their owne soules, they cannot be cleansed from the same; but when they have once thorowly sifted themselves, and by godly sorrow laboured to purge their consciences, as neare as possibly they can, from all secret sins, then though they cannot say, I have no sin; yet they may boldly say, I allow no sinne: and therefore I am assured that I am no dissembler: and that Gods judgements should never light on me, because I have prevented the same by judging my selfe, and by abandoning those corruptions which might procure his wrath and displeasure against me.

2

Secondly, let us use the meanes whereby our hearts may be made

made pure and undefiled; namely, the Word, Sacrament and Prayer: for though we mourne never so much, that is but as it were plowing of our hearts: if there be not good seed also sowne thereupon, we cannot expect any crop of grace: all the sorrow and afflictions in the world, without that, can do us no good, but rather much hurt; therefore it is set downe in the Text, as a note of a true heart, in those Israelites that came to receive the Passeover, *That they did seeke the Lord God of their Fathers*, in that meane which he had ordained for the helping and healing of them: wherein if we can imitate them, we shall speed as they did, all our breaches shall be made up, and all our deadly diseases shall be by degrees healed, and at length fully and perfectly cured. Thirdly, we must not onely have recourse unto Gods ordinances, but set downe our reckoning beforehand, that we shall assuredly finde the efficacy and powerfull operation thereof: and that God will not mock and delude us with vaine hopes; but look what promise he hath made in his Word, he will accordingly make good the same: and not one word shall fall to the ground, of all the good things that he hath covenanted to bestow upon us. And therefore (as we are exhorted in the former place to the *Hebrews*) *We must draw neere in assurance of faith*; & then according to our faith it shal be unto us. And the like we have in the *Revel. I counsell thee* (saith Christ to the luke-warme *Laodiceans*) *to buy of me gold tryed in the fire*, &c. teaching us hereby, that we must highly esteeme, and heartily desire the holy things of God, and be at cost to part with our corruptions, and make account that we shall not be disappointed when we come thus affected unto Christ Iesus. And the he wil enrich us, that before were poore; and clothe us, that before were naked; and enlighten our eyes, that before were altogether shut up in blindnes & ignorance.

Vsing the meanes. Ier. 44. *Note.*

3 Expectation of a blessing.

Rev. 3. 18.

Thirdly, here is matter of consolation for them that can approve the sincerity of their hearts by the fore-named trials. Who before they dare present themselves at the Lords Table, or presume to aske any comfort from Iesus Christ, do first afflict themselves: and before they intreat the Lord to bind them up, do first seeke to breake their owne hearts by inward remorse and contrition for all their offences; and yet content

Vse 3.

not themselves thus to breake up the fallow ground of their hearts, but come unto the Lord, as he commandeth them, to beseech him to sow his precious seed upon them; and do rest and relye on him for the doing of it. Let such be of good comfort; for undoubtedly the Lord will not send them empty away, their labour shall not be lost, nor their hope be disappointed: but they shall certainly have good successe, according to their expectation. 1. Because they have done what they could for their part. 2. *Hezekiahs* prayer standeth in as good force yet still, as it did at that time when it was made: and the same in effect is continually offered up unto God by many of his elect, for such as are so humbled and fitted for that worke: yea, and Christ Iesus also in his owne person hath sanctified and blessed that Sacrament, to all beleevers that shall worthily partake of it unto the end of the world: and therefore comming thus affected and prepared, they cannot misse of the promised blessing.

(*Though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the Sanctuary.*) In these words he preventeth that feare & doubt of good successe, that might arise in their hearts for want of preparation: for the Law was, that no uncleane person should have any thing to do with the Passeover: Now divers of them were in their uncleanesse, because they had not time to purge themselves according to the legall rites: therefore *Hezekiah* here seeketh to helpe the matter, and in effect he saith thus: I confesse O Lord, there are divers ceremoniall circumstances wanting in our preparation to the Sacrament: but so the case stood with us, that we knew not how possibly to help it, and therefore, Lord, be mercifull unto us in that regard. In that he prayeth thus for them, albeit they had so failed in want of due preparation, that they might justly have beene punished for the same, if they had had time to have done better, and had not this beene an extraordinary case: the Doctrine hence arising, is this: that,

Doct. 3. **Failing in circumstances of Gods service hinders not the blessing.**

So long as we labour to keepe the substance of Gods worship, though we faile in some circumstances thereof, he wil be mercifull unto us.

If we embrace the substance thereof willingly, and faile in the

the circumstances unwillingly, God will never lay it to our charge. Examples will prove this more fully unto us. *Ye have heard of the patience of Iob* (saith the Apostle *James*) *and ye know what end God made with him.* Now if we reade over the book of *Iob*, we shall find, that there was in him a great deale of passion and distemper, and that he held but very weakly in a great part of the conflict: as when he cursed the day of his birth, and conceived hardly of the Lord, and was ready to dispute and reason the matter with him: shewing much unwillingnesse to submit himselfe to those strokes which God had laid upon him: for which he was justly reproved both by *Elihu*, and also by the Lords own mouth: yet because he held out in the substance of godlinesse, in the midst of all his woes and miseries, and at the beginning thereof humbled himselfe, saying, *Naked came I out of my mothers wombe, and naked shall I returne thither: the Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken it: blessed be the Name of the Lord:* as also afterward he used many good and holy speeches concerning his own ill deserts, and the righteousnes of Gods proceeding, if he should deale in extremity of justice with him: and in the end acknowledged his fault, and desired to lay his hand upon his mouth: because (I say) these good things were found in him, God passeth by his infirmities, and taketh notice of his patience, with high commendation thereof: Setting him forth as a patterne most worthy our imitatiō, when we are pressed down with the weight of adversitie, as he was. For the Lord in his wisedome considered, that it was not through any stubbornnesse, or rebellious disposition, that he brake out in that manner: but through the violence of his affliction, and temptations, and through the ignorance and indiscreet carriage of his friends, who dealt very uncharitably, and unmercifully with him. In like manner is *Rahab* commended, as one that by reason of her faith and works, *perished not with them which obeyed not, when she had received the Spies peaceably.* Yet if we look into the Story, we shall easily discern a great deale of infirmity in that very work of love & mercy, by which she got the testimony of such a notable faith: for she bewraied much unbeliefe, in making a lie to preserve the Spies in safety. *There came men unto me* (saies she)

Iam. 5. 11. Iob 3.

Iob 1. 21.

Iam. 2. 25. Heb. 11. 31.

Iosh. 2. 4. 5.

but I wist not whence they were. And when they shut the gate in the darke, the men went out; whither they went, I wot not: follow after them quickly, for you shall overtake them: Every word she here spake, was false, and savoured of much weakenesse: and yet all this God takes no knowledge of, when he is to speake of her, and of her faith and love. Indeed she was but a new comer on, and had not beene instructed as yet what the danger of a lye was, &c. and therefore notwithstanding her failing in that particular, she is brought by the Apostle *James*, as an example of one that was justified (or made knowne to be a just and righteous woman) by her works: none other being reckoned up, but those which she did at that time.

Iam. 2. 25.

So the Angel (as is recorded in the Gospel) rebuked those good and faithfull women, for that *they sought the living among the dead:* yet withall he telleth them, *Be not afraid, ye seeke Jesus of Nazareth that hath beene crucified.* As if hee should say, Here is your errour, that you seeke Christ where you should not: he is risen againe, as he foretold you that he would; yet herein doth our uprightnesse appeare, that you hold out still in the love and profession of Christ, even now, when he is in such disgrace and dislike, almost with all men: & therefore be not dismayed, but herein take comfort. Thus we may perceive how favourable the LORD is towards his children; that offend not upon set purpose, and presumptuously: but through Satans instigation, or through humane frailty: in which regard the Prophet *Micah* bursteth forth into an admiration of his graciousdealing; *Who is a God like unto thee, that taketh away iniquity, and passeth by the transgressions of the remnant of his heritage? &c. he will returne and have mercy upon us:* and why? *because mercy pleaseth him,* Verse 18.

Luk. 24. 5. Mar. 16. 6.

Mich. 7. Verse 18. 19.

This maketh for the confutation of their errour,

Vse 1. See the reasons in the former Sermon. *Doct. 9. Vse 1.*

1. That thinke they have no calling to come to the Sacrament, because they see more and greater faults in themselves, than they can espie, or then indeed, there are in many other Christians: and it may be, more than heretofore they saw in themselves. They finde so much hypocrisie, so much pride, so much vaine-glory and selfe-love: such blindnesse of minde, drowsinesse of spirit, deadnesse of heart, such unwillingnesse

to

to heare, or read, or meditate, to pray, to receive the Sacrament, to ſing Pſalmes, and the like, that they are wonderfully diſhartened, & begin to fear that God wil in no ſort accept of them, if they ſhould come unto the Table of his Sonne. But they muſt take heed how they give way to ſuch conceits: for the things above mentioned, doe not exclude them from having right unto Chriſt Ieſus, and to his merits, and therefore ſhould by no meanes keepe them from the Sacrament.

But we come far ſhort of that, that ſhould bee in us. What of that? If you have a ſight of your defects, and a mourning heart for the ſame, and a conſtant indeavour to get the graces that you want, then may and ought you to come to the Sacrament as well as any other: yea, if any have cauſe to make haſte unto it, you are one of them: for the more dangerous any ones ſicknes is, the greater ſpeed hee ſhould make to the Phyſician; and the more grievous any mans wound is, the more neede hath hee to haſten to the Surgeon. Neither is their abſenting of themſelves from the Sacrament, any meanes to better their eſtate, but the next way to keep them in a bad caſe ſtill: Nay, to make their condition farre worſe than it is, and to haſten the plagues of God upon them. By the Law of *Moſes* it was determined, that all thoſe that were negligent to keep the Paſſeover, ſhould incurre the ſentence and cenſure of excommunication, if they were not in a journey, hindred by inundations of waters, detained by ſickneſſe, or ſome extraordinary accident of that kinde. Now if they were ſo ſtrictly bound to repaire unto that feaſt, when it was to be celebrated at *Ieruſale*, which was many miles diſtant from the greateſt part of them that were inhabitants in that land: how much more are men now tyed to attend upon the celebration of the Lords Supper, ſeeing they need not undertake ſuch a tedious journey, but may have it miniſtred unto them neere at hand, and that with leſſe coſt (& yet a larger bleſſing) than they could in the daies of the ceremoniall law? Surely if they do neglect ſo great ſalvation, well they may eſcape the puniſhment of men, but they ſhall feele the ſtrokes of God, & ſhall be cut off from having communion with him, and with his ſervants: they *ſhall beare their ſinne*, (as in that place the holy Ghoſt ſpeaketh) which

Objection. Anſwer.

Inconveniences that ariſe from forbearing the Sacrament.

1

Num. 9. 13.

which otherwise by receiving the Sacrament, they might have discharged their consciences of, and put it over unto Christs accounts.

2 2 Further, those that by reason of their infirmities will forgoe that ordinance, doe greatly dishonour God, and lay an hard imputation upon him; as who should say, that hee were such an extreame and rigorous Iudge, as will accept of none but of those that have attained to a great measure of perfection.

3 Besides, such kind of persons doe, as much as in them lyeth, proclaime themselves to be hypocrites: for if they be not such, they have a Calling to partake of the Sacrament; as appeareth in this Text, by the prayer of *Hezekiah*, who doth in assurance of faith, (as the effect manifestly proveth) make request for all such as prepared their *whole hearts*, (that is, did their best endevour with a true and sincere heart) *to seeke the Lord*.

4 Lastly, they give very ill examples unto others, and expose themselves to the censures of men, as contemners, or at least, neglecters of Gods Ordinance. And therfore in these regards, let al beware how they withdraw themselves, when the *Lord* inviteth them to such a banquet.

Vse 2. Secondly, this is for instruction and consolation both together, albeit we perceive many blemishes, & great imperfections in our selves, yet let us take the Lords offer, when he calleth us to his Table: & come with certain expectation of good successe, as well as those that have a greater measure of repentance, and of faith, and love, than wee can attaine unto. For Christ Iesus the great Shepheard and Bishop of our soules, taketh order, that not only his Sheepe, but his Lambes also may be fed. All the good grounds bring not forth a like quantity of fruit: yet all agree in this substantiall point, that they bring forth good and ripe fruit; though some doe not yeeld the third part so much as others doe, yet they are grounds blessed by God, and respected of God. He that gained five talents, had the commendation of a good and faithfull servant, and so had he likewise that gained but two talents: so that every one shal have the praise of well doing, according to the gifts and graces that

1 Pet. 1. 25. Ioh. 21. 15.

Math. 13. 23.

Note.

that God hath imparted unto him. Indeed those that doe most and best, as they bring more glory to Gods Name; so shall they have a larger reward from him: yet withall, those that have fewer talents, and doe him lesse service, shal not be despised nor rejected, but according to their works be accepted, & recompenced: for one may be faithfull in a little, as well as in a great deale. Therefore let this be an incouragement unto us to draw neer unto God in his worship: if we cannot come as well as wee would, let us come as well as we can, and bring those talents which we have: if we cannot make a long prayer, let us make a short: if we cannot cry fervently unto the Lord, let us sigh that we cannot doe better: if we have but a little faith, let us pray with the man in the Gospell, *Lord, I beleeve, helpe my unbeliefe:* which if we can doe, the Lord will be mercifull unto us, though we be not fitted in every respect according to that which is required of us. Mark 9. 24.

But my wants are such as I am afraid I shall faile, not only in some circumstances, but in the substance it self; and shal not onely receive weakely, but altogether unworthily, how then may we certainely know that our hearts are sincere and upright before the Lord? *Objection.*

By these markes that follow: *Answer.*

Markes of sincerity.

First, if we dislike all sin in our selves and others, and desire that all Gods graces might be wrought in our selves, and others. Hypocrites will allow foule faults in themselves, and yet seeme to dislike them, and much exclaime against them in others: whereas first they should be humbled and grieved for them in their owne soules, and then proceed to speake against them in others. I A generall dislike of sinne, and liking of goodnesse.

Againe, this hypocrisie is in our cursed nature, that, whereas we could wish that we might live without offence, & that our names might be preserved from reproach: yet wee shall finde a tickling delight in our selves, when we see the nakednesse of others discovered, and their faults ripped up to their disgrace: that so their blacke may the more commend our white. And againe, wee can be content to have many good gifts and graces, and would not be much grieved, if we could get all other that we want: yet we are ready to be offended, Hypocrisie.

that

that others should be indued with the like, especially that they should goe beyond us in doing good, & in receiving praise suitable thereunto. But this argueth great want of sincerities: and if we be not humbled for their corruptions, it sheweth palpable and grosse hypocrisie; for *love envyeth not*; but if we carry an inward hatred of this evill disposition that is in us; and labour to abhorre and seeke to hinder all manner of sins, as well in our selves, as in others; and in others, as well as in our selves: and on the other side, if we desire to love, and further good motions, and good actions, both in our brethren, and in our owne persons; neither mocking, nor deriding, nor discouraging the hearts of Gods poore servants from goodnesse, this is a cleere case that we faile not in the substance of godlinesse, but that our hearts are very upright therein.

1 Cor. 13. 4. Note.

2 Growth in grace. Phil. 3. 14. 16.

Secondly, if we indeavour still to be better, & to do better every day than other: never standing upon that we have done, but pressing hard to the marke: this is an infallible note, that we are true-hearted. Hee that feeleth but a little faith, a little love, a little repentance, &c. and would with all his heart have them increased: and on the contrary, findeth much deadnesse, much impatience, much unfitnesse for death, and much unwillingnesse to heare of the comming of Christ, much distraction on the holy Sabbath, &c. but would most willingly have these corruptions diminished; these very desires, if they bring him to the conscionable use of the meanes, are evident signes of a faithfull and well-affected heart.

3 Forgiving.

A third rule of trial is, if from our hearts we can forgive, or at least desire and strive to forgive those that have done us wrong, either in word or deed, and are grieved at wrathfull and malicious, and revengefull thoughts and motions that do spring up in our hearts. *Forgive* (saith our Saviour) *and ye shall be forgiven*: and therefore being able to doe thus in some small measure, we may be assured that the Lord is appeased toward us, and that we are in his favour; & therefore our hearts without guile in his sight: for a mercifull heart is alwaies a sincere heart; whereas hypocrites are of a cruell, and implacable nature: so that when any injury is done unto them, either in truth or in their imagination, they will swell, and fret, and chafe, &

Matth. 6. 14.

Note.

vow

vow and proteſt, (or at leaſt determine and reſolve in themſelues) that they will not put it up, but one way or other, at one time or other requite it to the full: ever an evill heart is a proud and froward heart, and can indure nothing leſſe than wrongs and indignities.

Therefore if God hath wrought ſuch a great worke in our ſoules, as that our hearts are inclined to forgive and forget abuſes that are offered unto us, and wee can pray for our enemies, and long for their converſion, and reconciliation; firſt unto God, and then unto us; it is a notable teſtimony that we are truely regenerated, and ſanctified.

There are none but they are apt to be angry with ſinne, either in themſelves, or others: but if we can ſpend our anger at home, upon the evils of our owne nature, and be more peaceable and quiet abroad; not ſtorming ſo much that others are ſo bad, as grieving that we our ſelves are no better; happy and bleſſed are we that have gotten ſuch a conqueſt of our owne hearts; wee may cheerefully and comfortably communicate at the Lords Table, expecting from Chriſt Ieſus a further increaſe of all holy and heavenly graces. And albeit, others have greater gifts, and fewer infirmities than wee; yet ſeeing wee joyne with them in the maine matters, we ſhall be joyned with them in the fruition of that bleſſing, which God uſeth to beſtow upon his people; though we be but buds, yet being in the true Vine, we ſhall receive ſap & juyce from the root as well as the faireſt, and goodlieſt, and fruitfulleſt branches that are in it. And thus much for *Hezekiahs* prayer, and the parts thereof.

Note.

Iohn 15.

Now the ſucceſſe followeth to be ſpoken of, *verſe 20. And the Lord heard Hezekiah, &c.* It being a prayer of faith that he made, for ſuch things as God hath promiſed, and for ſuch perſons as to whom the promiſe did belong, hee receiveth an anſwer to his requeſt: for ſo it is ſaid, *the Lord heard* Hezekiah: that is, accepted and granted his ſute: whence this Doctrine may be gathered; that,

Doct. Prayer of faith granted.

The Lord doth accept, and will fulfill every faithfull praier that is made unto him, either for our ſelves, or others.

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The Lord doth accept, and will fulfill every faithfull praier that is made unto him, either for our ſelves, or others. *Doct. 4. Prayer of faith granted.*

For this favour that he ſhewed to *Hezekiah*, & to them for whom

whom hee prayed, is written for our instruction and consolation; to assure us, that using the like meanes, we shall finde the same good effect that they did. This is promised in the Epistle of *John*, where the words of this Text are exponnded, and the doctrine confirmed. *This* (saith hee) *is the assurance*
1 Ioh. 5. 14. 15. *that we have in him, that if we aske any thing according to his will, he heareth us*. But what is to be heard? he telleth us in the next verse, *if we know that he heareth us, whatsoever wee aske, we know that we have the petitions that we have desired of him*. This Gods children may build upon, that if they aske of God lawfull things, for righteous persons, in that manner as the Word prescriberh, they shall have a comfortable answer, and speed according to their hearts desire.

Reason. The reason hereof is, because God is delighted with the faithfull supplications of his deare children, as may bee collected from the words of Christ to his Spouse in the songs of *Salomon, Shew me thy sight, let me heare thy voyce: for thy voice is sweet, and thy sight is comely*. So that there is a reason, why Christians should looke up to God, rather than be beholding unto men, and that they should utter their complaints before his Throne, rather than before mens judgement seate: for whereas they many times cannot away with us and our suits, God delighteth to looke upon us; and there is no melodious harmony so pleasant in our eares, as a prayer proceeding from an humble and broken heart, is in the eare of the Lord of Hoasts. Let us present our petitions with our soules full of griefe, and our eyes full of teares unto men, and we shal be tedious and troublesome unto them for the most part: as the woman of *Canaan* was unto the Disciples: *Send her away* (say they to our Saviour) *for shee cryeth after us*. But Christ hath no greater joy, then to heare and relieve such worthy beleevers as she was, that can spend so many holy prayers upon him, after so many repulses as she had received. Now sith it is a thing so well pleasing unto him, hee cannot but grant and satisfie the desires of such as faithfully and fervently call upon him.

It is musicke to God to heare Christian prayers. Cant. 2. 14.

Matth. 15. 23.

Note.

Vse 1. Here may that folly, and wretched unbeliefe that is in our nature, be justly reproved, which appeareth in this, that we are

are ready to runne to any one, rather than unto God; and to seeke to them that are not able, or not willing to hear and help us, rather than unto the Lord that hath abilitie and readineſſe to doe both. *Iames* blameth thoſe to whom he writeth, that were vexed with their wants; *Yee luſt, and have not, & ye fight and warre, and get nothing*, and what is the reaſon? *becauſe yee aske not*. As if he ſhould have told them, you need many things, and ſo you are likely to doe ſtill, except you take a better courſe: for the way to obtaine good things, is not to luſt after them, and to brawle and contend for them, but to become petitioners unto God for them. If children will be ſo fooliſh, ſo ſlothfull, or ſo prond, that they will not ſue to their loving and kinde parents that have abundance, for things neceſſary, it is juſt they ſhould goe without them, and indure the ſmart of their owne folly and ſtubborneſſe: and the like may be ſaid of us; if our neceſſities ſpirituall and corporall bee many and great, and we will not bemoane our caſe unto our heavenly Father that is all-ſufficient to helpe us, and moſt willing to accept of us, and to relieve us in all our diſtreſſes, it is a righteous thing with the Lord, that we ſhould live and dye in our miſeries and calamities, and ſo ſuſtaine the due puniſhment of our wretched diſtruſtfulneſſe, and ſluggiſhneſſe in not repayring unto him. Iam. 4. 2. *Note.*

Secondly, here is matter of marvellous great comfort to them that betake themſelves to this courſe that *Hezekiah* did. The Lord will not deceive them, nor ſhut out thoſe ſupplications that they make before him: but (according as they intreat of him) where their faith is weake, he will ſtrengthen it: where their repentance comes ſhort, he will perfect it: where their love is cold, hee will increaſe it: and in a word, where any good thing is wanting, he will ſupply it. *Vſe 2.*

If *Hezekiah*, praying for ſuch a great multude, which had beene monſtrous Idolaters, and had continued long time in their Idolatry, heaping up one abomination upon another, and now come to the Sacrament, not of their own accord, but by the intreatie and perſwaſion of *Hezekiah* and his Princes, and being thus come, failed much in the preparation which they ſhould have made: if hee, I ſay, had ſuch good and gra- *Note.*

cious hearing from the Lord, things ſtanding as hath bin ſaid; then how much more may we expect mercy from him, when we intreat for our ſelvas, who (through Gods wonderfull reſtraint, and gracious providence) have not fallen into ſuch notorious evils, nor into ſuch grievous, and monſtrous offences, as they had done? eſpecially if we have this witneſſe unto our ſoules, that we come voluntarily, and (in ſome degree) preparedly, unto the myſteries of ſalvation; and are ſo farre from looking for intreatie or exhortatiou thereunto, that (through Gods grace and goodneſſe) we would not be reſtrained from it for any worldly gaine.

[*And healed the people,*] For the underſtanding of this, wee muſt know, that ſinne maketh a wound, and that the Word and Sacrament are meanes and plaiſters, as it were, to heale the ſame, if they be rightly applyed and bleſſed unto the receivers of them.

In that they found this good effect upon the eating of the Paſſeover, and *Hezekiahs* prayer made for them: the doctrine hence to be learned is, that,

Doct. 5. The vertue of the Sacrement

The Sacrament worthily received, doth heale and cure. For whence came their healing in this place, but frō the vertue of the Sacrament bleſſed unto them, at the earneſt requeſt of that holy King? Hee telleth us not the particular evils, of which they were healed, becauſe we ſhould conceive, that they were in a ſort, perfectly and thorowly cured of all. Firſt of the evils that were in their ſoules: they were pardoned, their conſciences quieted, and their hearts bettered: ſo that they had a greater diſlike of their own corruptions, & of Satans temptations, and more power to withſtand them, and to overcome them, than formerly they had. Then for outward evils: if there were any ſickneſſe, or weakeneſſe, or any other croſſes or calamities upon them, they had the ſame either quite removed, or at leaſt ſweetned, and ſanctified unto them, for their profit and comfort. For this is the ſubſtance of the Covenant (whereof the Sacrament is a Seale, made unto penitent perſons: &

Vſe. 36. which having beene ſpoken of before, it would be needleſſe at large to repeat the ſame things againe. Onely in briefe for the uſe of this point, let us hence learne to make full ac-

count of his healing, when the Lord ſhall pleaſe to make us partakers of the body and bloud of his deare Sonne. For then that ſeed is caſt upon every faithfull heart, that will ſpring up in due ſeaſon unto everlaſting life, and yeeld us ſuch fruit as we ſhal have great cauſe to rejoyce, and to magnifie the name of the Lord, who hath done ſuch great things for us.

Let us then looke for much, and we ſhall have much, *Open thy mouth wide* (ſaith the Lord) *and I will fill it*. Therefore when we behold with our naturall eye, the bread broken, and the wine powred forth, and offered unto us by the hand of the Miniſter; let us lift up the eye of our faith; and looke upon Chriſt Ieſus, who is as it were held forth unto us by the hand of the Trinity, being broken with many ſorrows and terrors, in bearing his Fathers wrath, and undergoing the puniſhment due unto us for our hainous tranſgreſſions: & powring forth his precious bloud, to ſatisfie the Lords juſtice, and to pacifie his diſpleaſure conceived againſt us: and as we with our bodily hand do receive the outward elements; ſo let us by the hand of faith lay hold of our Lord and Saviour, and of all his merits: aſſuring our ſelves, that as the Bread and Wine are made one ſubſtance with us; ſo is Chriſt Ieſus in a ſpiritual manner made one with us, and we with him; he being the Head, and we the members; he the Vine, and we the branches, &c. And further let us undoubtedly beleeve, that as by bread and wine our naturall ſtrength is increaſed, and our weary bodies & languiſhing ſpirits refreſhed; ſo by thoſe heavenly myſteries duly applyed, our inward man ſhall be confirmed, and our hearts ſooner or later comforted and revived. And therfore in aſſurance of faith we ſhould ſtirre up our ſoules to rejoyce and praiſe the Lord, giving unto him the glory of his Truth, in reſting upon him for the performance of all his promiſes made unto us through Chriſt Ieſus: and concluding every one in his owne heart, though my knowledge be but ſmall, it ſhall be increaſed; though my memory be weake, it ſhall be confirmed; though my affections be out of order, they ſhall be rectified; though my frailties be many, the number of them ſhall be diminiſhed; and though my graces be but few and feeble, they ſhall be augmented, and ſtill further ſtrengthened; I ſhall have

Note.

have Christs power to inable me to do good, and to resist evill: his wisedome to direct me in the right way, and to cause me to decline from all by-pathes: And in a word, his good Spirit to worke all my workes for me, and to perfect all heavenly vertues in me.

And when, after we have been at the Lords Table, we find any sinfull motions stirring within us, let us reason thus: Did I not lately receive the Sacrament, for the curing of my soule? and did not God grant it unto me as a seale and pledge, that he would *take away my stony heart, and give unto me a fleshly heart?* Why then should I yeeld unto my corruptions? Nay, I will not do so, but resist and strive against the same, and urge the Lord with his owne Covenant, sealed unto me in the Sacrament.

So likewise, when we see our manifold imperfections in Gods service; our want of love and good affection unto his servants; our inability to beare crosses, and the like: let us repaire unto the Lord, and beseech him that is true and faithfull in all promises, that he will make good his word unto us in those particulars, giving us strength to do what he commandeth us, and to beare with patience whatsoever he layeth upon us. Which if we can do, so often as we come to the Lords Table, we shall receive great helpe and comfort against all our sinnes and sorrows, and be much stirred up to love and praise the Lord, for the continuance and increase of his heavenly graces and blessings, which we shall surely gaine by the right use of this his holy ordinance.

A. D.

THE

THE FIFTH Sermon.

ISAIAH 55. 1, &c.

Verse 1. *Hoe, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and ye that have no silver, come buy, and eate: Come, I say, buy Wine, and Milke, without silver, and without money.*

2. *Wherefore, do you lay out your silver, and not for bread; and your labour without being satisfied? Hearken diligently unto me, and eate that which is good, and let your soule delight in fatnesse.*

3. *Incline your eares, and come unto me: heare, and your soule shall live.*

IN the Chapter immediately going before, the Prophet from the Lords owne mouth pronounceth many gracious promises to his afflicted Church, bidding them rejoyce in regard of the deliverance that the Lord should work out for them, and the many & wonderfull blessings that he should bestow upon thē: shewing them (to the intent they might give more credit unto his words) that he that made them, is their Husband, & their Redeemer, even the Lord of hosts; who though he had forsaken them, and scattered them for a little while, yet with great compassion would he gather them; & though he hid his face in anger for a moment, yet with everlasting mercy would he have com-

Verse 4.

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tion

8 sion on them, and that they might make no doubt thereof, he confirmeth his promise with an oath, saying, As I have sworn that the waters of *Noah* should no more go over the earth: so have I sworne that I will not be angry with thee, nor rebuke thee, *viz.* in wrath and displeasure: and therefore he breaketh out into a patheticall and sweet compellation, saying, O thou afflicted and tossed with tempest, that hast no comfort: behold 11 I will lay thy stones with the Carbuncle, and thy foundation with *Saphyres:* that is, I will make of thee a precious building 13 for my selfe. And as for their children, he saith, that *they shall be taught of God, and enjoy peace:* and be farre from oppression, and from the feare of oppressors. And howsoever the enemie would be stirring now and then; yet (saith God) it shall be without me; and whosoever shall gather himselfe in thee, against thee, shall fall: and that, because all instruments of cru- 17 elty that could come against them, were ordered by the Lord, as being his by right of creation: and therefore no weapons made against them should prevaile. And this he doth not appropriate to them only, but saith it is the heritage of the Lords servants, which they have right unto in all ages: and he addeth a reason, saying, their righteousnesse is of me: q. d. that which their enemies strike at, is the goodlinesse and goodnesse of my children. Now that proceedeth from me, and therefore I have cause to stand for them that carry mine owne image.

Having thus declared what treasures were laid up for them through the rich mercy of God in Christ; hee commeth in this 55. Chapter to exhort them to lay hold of Gods gracious offer.

And because they were not so sensible nor capable of such spirituall promotions as they should be, therefore doth he go about to waken their drowsie consciences, and to stir up their sleepy affections, to embrace the mercies offered unto them, and for that end doth make, as it were, a Proclamation; [*Hoe every one*] as if he should have said, are not these things to be thought of? are they not worth the looking after? shake off the sluggishnes of your flesh, & consider wel of the excellency of them, and bethinke your selves how you may attaine unto them: and that he might more easily draw them hereunto,

he

he sheweth what kind of people the Lord requireth that they should be, *viz.* (*thirsty*) that is, so pained with their sins and wants, and with a desire of a supply from heaven, as those that are exceeding dry are with thirst, & with a longing for drink, whereby that appetite of theirs may be quenched and allaied: none have a calling to come, nor shall have comfort by comming unto Gods ordinances, but onely such. Having shewed what they must be, in the next place he telleth them what they must do [*come ye to the waters*] that is, unto Christ, as he is offered in the Word and Sacrament: for he is *the well of the water of Life*, which is proposed and offered unto all that *thirst*, *Rev.* 21.6. Now to the intent that they might not deceive their own hearts, he exhorteth them to shew forth their spirituall thirst by the effect, *come and buy*: signifying unto us thus much, that even as those that are naturally hungry and thirsty will seek for reliefe where it is to be found, and if they cannot otherwise get meat & drink, they will be well content to part with their money for the obtaining thereof: even so it is with such as have a spirituall appetite, they will be at cost to buy the graces of the holy Ghost: not that men have any thing to give which is valuable thereunto, but they must part with their sins (as afterward shall be more fully declared) which the Lord will take for good & sufficient payment. Then further as they must *buy*, so must they *eat & drinke*: for otherwise they might die through hunger and thirst, albeit they had great plenty of refreshing before them: now this eating must be by faith, for thereby we feed on Christ, as is evident in the Gospel of *John*, *Chap.* 6. for without this we can draw no vertue at all from the Word or Sacraments, or any of Gods ordinances: these then are the things required of those that are thirsty, *viz.* diligence in comming, cost in buying, and faith in eating.

Now lest they should feare that they shall not finde full refreshing when they come unto Christ in the use of his means, he preventeth that doubt, by shewing that the Lord would fit every mans turne according to their severall necessities: some have sorrowfull hearts; for such he hath *wine* to comfort them: some are babes: for such he hath *milke* to nourish them: others are feeble and weake; for such he hath *bread* to strengthen them:

them: others looke after their commodity; to such he saith, *eate that which is good*: and lastly, others respect their pleasure; and to them he saith, *Let your soules delight in fatnesse*, q. d. Here you shal find such pleasant things, as shall fill your soules with delight and contentment. Indeed the things that are offered (will some say) are very pious, and much to be desired: but my unworthinesse is such, that I am even discouraged to seeke for them.

Objection.

You need not be so; for you are bid, *Come and buy Wine, and Milke*, &c. *without silver, and without money*: though you be never so meane & beggerly, in regard of any merits of your owne, yet you shall speed never the worse: for this onely is required of you, to come with a sight and feeling of your wants, and with an earnest desire to have them supplied. But because men are wonderfully hindred from the zealous pursuit of holy things, by their owne corruptions, and the love of this present evill world, therefore he dissuadeth them therefrom, saying, *Wherefore do you lay out your silver, and not for bread, and your labour without being satisfied?* q. d. there is none of you but would willingly have your hearts strengthened and comforted, and thorowly contented: but these earthly things will not do it, for they are all *vanity and vexation of spirit*, and therefore it is a great folly for you so much to busie your selves about these earthly things, which will never bring sound comfort, nor contentment to your soules.

Answer.

Now that which he delivered in figurative speeches in the first verse, and part of the second, he urgeth in plainer termes afterwards, saying, *Hearken diligently unto me; Encline your eares and heare*, q. d. though you find great dulnesse and slacknesse in your nature, yet use a holy kinde of violence, and constraine your eares to hearken: and what then? *your soules shall live*, to wit, both the life of grace, which before they were destitute of, and also the life of glory, which necessarily followeth upon the former.

The drift then of these words is to stir men up to embrace the saving graces of Christ, as they are offered, and shall be given in his ordinances, where is declared,

1. What they must do, *viz.* get a thirsty and hungry soule, and

and shew it forth by comming to the *waters*, by buying spirituall food, and by eating thereof.

2. Reasons why they must do so.

1. The first taken from the ill successe that would follow, if they did not so: they should spend their money and labour in vaine.

2. The second, from the singular benefits that would redound unto them if they did so: all their wants should be supplyed, and their soules shall live everlastingly.

Hoe, every one that thirsteth; In that he calleth none to partake of the holy things of God, but those that are thus affected: The Doctrine is: that,

The thirstie soule alone hath interest in the graces of God, and shall reape benefit, by the meanes of grace. *Doct. 2.* Onely thirsty soules find refreshing from Gods ordinances.

Those onely that feele their owne barrennesse and emptinesse, and highly esteeme and heartily desire the mercies of God, through the merits of Christ, they onely (I say) have right unto, & shall have a portion in the same. Therfore when *David* would move God to bring him againe to the assemblies of the Saints, where he might enjoy the meanes of comfort and of salvation, he useth this as a forcible argument, *My soule thirsteth for God, even for the living God: when shall I come and appeare before the presence of God?* and againe, *My soule longeth, yea, and fainteth for the Courts of the Lord*, &c. Psal. 42. 2. Psal. 48. 2.

Now the reasons of these points are these.

First, no man hath any warrant to resort unto the meanes of godlinesse, but onely such as were before mentioned: for thus the Lord inviteth men unto him: *Let him that is athirst, come: and let whosoever will* (namely, that is so qualified) *take of the waters of life freely*: so that none are bidden guests but such as have thirsty soules. *Reason* 1. 1 Else no commandement. Revel. 22. 17.

Secondly, none else have any promise of speeding well, if they should come: for thus goeth the promise, *I will powre water upon the thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground*. Till then we can never have assurance of any benefit by Gods ordinances, but when once we come with a longing heart, that doth as it were gape and enlarge it selfe to take in the rains of grace, as the dry ground doth to receive the showres that fall upon it. 2 No promise. Isa. 44. 3.

it, then though we be never so thirsty, we shall be fully satisfied; & though we be never so dry and barren, we shall be made to flourish and grow as the grasse, and as the willowes by the rivers of water: and that none other can grow in grace, or gather any spirituall strength by the meanes, it is evident in the Epistle of *Peter*, where he exhorteth them in this manner: *As new borne babes desire the sincere milke of the Word that ye may grow thereby. q. d.* You may repaire unto the Word as often as you will, and give as diligent care as you can: but you shall never get any inward growth of grace thereby, until you be desirous for the food of your soules, as little children are for the mothers milke: but when once you attaine to such an eager desire of goodnesse, then you shall grow from a little measure of strength, to a greater, and still increase in the inward man, as children do in the outward: and finde a progresse in grace, as they do in nature.

3 No fitnesse. Thirdly, as those that are destitute of this spirituall thirst, have no commandement, nor promise from God: so neither have they any fitnesse in themselves, because they want that principall grace, which doth fit men for the entertaining of Gods holy Spirit (which alone maketh Gods ordinances effectuall) to wit, Humility; which proceedeth from a sense of our owne misery, and a sight of Gods mercy: now where this is wanting, there is no place for Gods graces: *For God* Iames 4. *resisteth the proud, and giveth grace*, onely, *to the humble*. Let a man bring unto the Word never so good a wit, capacitie, and memorie, he shall never take profit by hearing, till he get a broken heart, and an humble spirit: but God will ever 1 Note. resist, and crosse, and thwart all his endeavours: because if he should get any benefit by the Gospell, he would have no minde to ascribe the glory thereof unto God, to whom it is wholly due; but to himselfe, to whom no part thereof doth belong.

2 First, for terrour unto such as have no manner of appetite, eagernesse, nor earnestnesse for spirituall things, but are altogether bent for profit, and pleasure, and credit, and promotion &c. which carnall desires do utterly kill their appetite unto better things, and extinguish or banish all good motions and affections

affections, that doe at any time arise in their hearts. These wretched men are in a wofull case, for they rush upon the holy things of God without any commission; and therefore without expectation of good from them. And howsoever they may talke and brag of their profiting by the Word, yet God that seeth and searcheth their hearts, esteemeth of them, but as of unwelcome guests that prophane his holy things. If they would bee partakers of the water of life, they must bee thirstie: and if they would eate of the bread of life, they must bee hungry: otherwise though they be present in the congregation, and heare the Word preached, and see the Wine poured out, and the bread broken before their eyes at the celebration of the Lords Supper, yet they can have no hope that they shall have one drop of Christ his bloud, to wash away their sins, but may rather expect the viols of his indignaiion, to destroy their bodies and soules: and it is a just vengeance of God upon such prophane and irreligious persons, that when they come to the Sermons and to the Sacrament they get no good, but rather much hurt thereby: and have their lusts stronger, their hearts harder, and their mindes farre more blinde and uncapable of any good knowledge every day than other.

But what is the reason hereof? (may some demand,) Is not the word of God mighty to beat downe the strong holds of the Divell? and is not the Sacrament powerfull in operation, and able to worke great things?

Yes, they are so: and why then have such no profit by them? because they are abusers and prophaners, and not meet receivers of the same: because they come not with any preparation, or desire of a blessing upon the meanes, but for custome and fashion, that they might not seeme to be so bad, as indeed they are: nor to set so light by the holy Ordinances of God, as in truth they doe.

Secondly, for instruction. If wee would be welcome to Christ Iesus, when hee inviteth us to feast with him, then let us get a good stomacke to feede on such cheere as he offereth unto us. Otherwise, if wee glut our selues before wee come to his Table, and onely looke on those dainties, on which others

Vse 2.

others doe feed, it will not be well taken at our hands, but we ſhall bee as diſtaſtfull unto the feaſt-maker, as his proviſion is unto us: and thoſe things which are unto others the ſauour of life unto life, ſhall proove unto us the ſavour of death unto our eternall deſtruction, if our repentance doe not prevent Gods judgement. If Gods owne children comming careleſly and unpreparedly cannot eſcape Gods hand, 1 *Cor.* 11. then what ſhall become of thoſe ungodly ones, who come not only negligently, but altogether prophanely: and ſo defile the ſacred ordinances of God? (*for unto the uncleane, all things are uncleane:*) Surely, if judgement begin at Gods Houſe, there is nothing remaining for ungodly men, but a fearefull expectation of wrath and vengeance to be poured out upon them in full meaſure. In which regard it ſtandeth us upon to look unto our hearts beforehand: and to the intent wee may come with this ſpirituall appetite, the want whereof is ſo offenſive unto God, and dangerous unto us, let us uſe all good meanes for the obtaining of it: as

Tit. 1.

Meanes to ſet a ſpirituall appetite.

First, to purge away that which may annoy our ſtomacke, and kill our appetite: and what that is, *Peter* telleth us when he ſaith; *Wherefore laying aſide all malicionſnes, & al guile, and diſſimulation, and envy, and evill ſpeaking, as new born babes deſire the ſincere milk of the Word, &c.* As if he had ſaid, ſo long as you give place unto, and delight in any evill; ſo long as you carry a bitter & envious mind againſt your brethren, or an hypocriticall and diſſembling heart towards God, and ſuffer your evill affections to breake forth into evill ſpeeches, ſo long you can never delight in, nor be very deſirous of the pure Word of God, and therefore cannot poſſibly grow in the knowledge and practice of the ſame. And therefore when wee finde in our ſelves dulneſſe and deadneſſe, and unwillingneſſe unto good duties; let us conclude for certainty, that we ſtand in need of Phyſicke for the purging of our ſoules: for ſinne worketh on our hearts, as ill hnmours doe in our ſtomackes; it maketh us to loath all ſpirituall food, and all meanes of refreſhing. And this take for an undoubted truth, which though our mouthes will not confeſſe, yet our hearts muſt needs acknowledge; when we have no deſire to heare the Word preached,

I Allow no ſin. 1 Pet. 1. 2. *Note.*

or

or to receive the Sacrament, when it is to bee administred, there is some sin or other not throughly repented of, which so cloyeth the soule, that it cannot delight in those holy exercises: and as our hearts are more purged by godly sorrow, so will our hunger and thirst after righteousnesse, and the meanes thereof bee still increased in us. This then is the first rule that we must observe for the getting of a spirituall appetite, *viz.* to put away the practise of all grosse evils, and the allowance of all infirmities, great or small. Matth. 5.

A second is, that we must indeavour to know our owne misery, what we are of by nature, & by desert, in regard of our great and grievous offences: that so being poore in spirit, wee may sigh and cry for grace, whereas those that are proud in spirit care not for it. We see this by common experience, that the perceiving and feeling of grievous and dangerous diseases and distemperatures of the body, will drive men to the Physitian to intreat for physicke, that so their sicknesse may bee cured: and in like sort, the discerning and descrying of the loathsome and noysome corruptions wherwith our soules are infected and indangered, will drive us unto the LORD to crave mercy and grace from his owne meanes, that our iniquities may be fully pardoned, and our sinfull nature soundly healed. For when nothing is more irkesome unto us, nor more feared of us than sinne; then nothing is more desired of us, than grace. 2 See thy misery

Especially, (if in the third place) we consider the excellencie thereof: how it bringeth with it freedome from all evill, both from the guilt of sinne, and from the power and punishment of sinne: and withall, the injoyment of all blessings needfull for body and soule, for this life, or that which is to come. If (I say) the setled meditation hereof do but once sinke into our hearts, it cannot but set our affections on fire, with an ardent and earnest desire of the same. Nothing makes us so weake and cold in hearing the Word, or communicating of the Sacrament, as that we have not sufficiently tasted how good the Lord is. And thus much of the meanes of getting a spirituall appetite. Now it followeth. 3 Consider the excellency of grace.

[*Come, I say, buy wine and milke.*] And verse 2, [*Eat that which*

which is good, and let your soules delight in fatnesse. The drift of all these borrowed speeches is to shew that God offereth unto all, and will bestow upon the faithfull that seeke unto him, such spirituall good things, as shall much comfort and refresh their hearts, and make their soules to live for ever. Whence ariseth this Doctrine: that,

Doct. 2. All the wants of the faithfull supplied by Christ.

Whosoever commeth to Christ Iesus in the religious use of his ordinances, shall have all his wants supplyed, be they never so many, and never so great. Are they thirsty? he hath water of life for them. Are they hungry? he hath all varietie of dainties to refresh them. Are they babes? here is milke to feede upon. Are they strong men? yet wearied out with afflictions and temptations? here is bread that will strengthen their fainting hearts. Are they heavy and pensive? here is wine to glad their sorrowfull hearts. In a word, Christ Iesus hath plentifull provision of all sorts, and would have us eate that which is best for us; commanding that our soules should delight in fatnesse, and in the good things that he offereth unto us.

This doctrine is further illustrated and prooved unto us out of *Ezechiel*: where the Prophet having sharpely reproved the Shepheards of *Israel*, that fed themselves, and not their flocks, that did not strengthen the weake, nor heale the sicke, &c. hee promiseth that God wil be a shepheard over thē, even Christ Iesus, *verse* 23. who would performe these two things: *viz.* feede his sheepe, and bring them to their rest: then he undertaketh in all their miseries and distresses to looke unto them. *I will* (saith he) *seeke that which is lost, &c.* where observe how he frameth his remedy to their necessity: some feele themselves lost, and unable to seeke him as they should: those he will *seeke*, and not lose any of them, whom he hath so dearely bought. Some are as it were driven away by strong corruptions, & violent temptations: those *hee will bring again*, though they be carried never so farre. Others have been crushed and broken with many sorrowes & miseries, even with one breaking upon another, by reason of their owne sinnes: those hee will *binde up*, and cure all their wounds. Others againe are weake and full of imperfections, *those hee will strengthen* by the power of his might, and at length make them strong men

Ezek. 34. 15 16

in Christ. So that we see, every one according to his need, shal receive comfort and relieſe from him: and there are reasons hereof.

The first is taken from the infinite power of Christ, where- *Reason 1.* by he is able to save and succour his people, whatsoever their *He is able.* estate be. If the first *Adam* being onely man, were able to destroy and overthrow all mankinde, then much more is the second *Adam*, being God and Man, of sufficient power to recouer his elect: especially seeing that the meanes hee useth are forre more forcible to repaire our breaches, than *Adams* meanes were to make them: and more effectuall to work out our happinesse and salvation, than his were to procure our misery and destruction.

The second is taken from his readinesse, being every whit 2 as willing as he is able to doe this for us. As GOD the Father *He is ready.* gave him a charge, so he undertooke it, and accomplished the *worke which he gave him to doe:* It was his Fathers will that he should save his people, & he willingly performed whatsoever was required of him in that behalfe; and therefore before hee yeelded up the ghost, he uttered these words; *It is finished:* sig- Ioh. 19. 30 nifying, that he had gone thorow with that painefull worke which the Lord had imposed upon him: now having done the greatest for us, he will not faile us (we may be well assured) in smaller matters which depend upon the former; He that was willing to give his bloud for us when wee were his enemies, will deny no good thing now we are his friends, yea true members of his owne body.

Thirdly, he is also infinite in wisedome, and therefore able 3 to finde out the best way, and to determine of the fittest time *He is infinitely* (with all other circumstances) to relieve & comfort us. There *wise.* is many times, such confusion in the mindes, such hardnesse in the hearts, such blemishes in the names, such weakenes upon the bodies, and such woefull breaches in the estates of Gods servants, that no man, nay, nor all the men in the world, know how to redresse the things that are amisse: but if it please our Lord Christ Iesus to take the cure in hand, nothing shall bee found too difficult for him: but that which seemeth impossible in the eye of reason, shall appeare not onely possible, but very

ease unto him, and therefore in all these respects it must needs be a certaine truth, that those that seek to him, and wait upon him, shall in due season be received, and delivered according to their need.

Vse 1. Which may be an encouragement unto us, whatsoever our wants and necessities be, to make Christ our refuge, & to flye unto him for a supply: if we come to wisedomes feast, we shall finde all things prepared that may be for strength, or for delight: if we be hungry, our Saviour will satisfie us with good things, and never send us empty away: if we be babes, he hath milke for us: if we be of greater growth in Christianity, hee hath stronger meat for us.

Pro. 9, 2.

2 Secondly, let us therefore labour to be meet guests for this heavenly banquet: which that we may be, let us observe the directions given us in this Text: *viz.* that we must first come, secondly, buy: and thirdly, eate.

First, we must come, to wit, unto those places, & unto those meanes where we may receive refreshing: even as *Iacob*, when he and his Family were pinched with famine, was glad to send and send into Egypt for food to relieve him and his: so will those that are spiritually hungry and thirsty, be at any paines, and breake through any difficulties for the satisfying and refreshing of their fainting soules, they will repayre unto the Word and Sacraments, which are the conduits through which the water of life is conveyed unto us: and there they shall bee sure to feed on the body and bloud of Christ, who is that true Manna, and that bread of life, whereof whosoever eateth shall not perish, but have everlasting life.

Iohn 6.

3 Secondly, if we will have any refreshing at this feast, we must buy it: which is twice repeated: to shew that it is a matter of necessity, and a matter of weight that neerely concerneth us: not that wee can give any thing answerable to the worth of that which wee shall receive (for grace is an unmatchable treasure) but hereby these two things are signified:

How we must buy.

1 First, that as in bargaines betwixt man and man, hee that buyeth a thing of another, must part with somewhat that formerly was his owne: so must we in this purpose of ours. And what is it that wee must part withall? with nothing but our

Part with sin.

owne

owne sinnes (which will do us no good, but infinite hurt if we retaine them still) & so with those things which can be no longer kept without sinne, as wealth, and liberty, and credit, and life it selfe, when God calleth for them. To this purpose, it is said, *that the Kingdome of Heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in the field, which when a man hath found, he hideth it, and for joy thereof departeth and selleth all that he hath*, meaning all that he hath from his own corrupt nature, renouncing all his carnal affections, & withdrawing his heart from the things here below: for it is not intended that every man should sell all his substance, and earthly possessions, & commodities; but onely that he should withdraw his confidence from these and his immoderate love of these, being content to forsake them quite, rather than to forgoe Christ, and to forfeit his own salvation: so that as the price wee pay for any thing is altogether alienated from us: so must sinne bee, though never so much esteemed, and beloved before-time. And so are these words expounded in this very Chap. ver. 7. *Let the wicked forsake his wayes, and the unrighteous his own imaginations, &c.* Many forsake some ill wayes, but not their owne: or if they doe leave their old wayes and workes outwardly, yet they doe not forsake their owne imaginations: but to leave anothers sinne for the procuring of this pearle, is as if one should buy cattell or grounds, &c. with another mans money, which is plaine theeverie, and will not goe for currant pay: the Lord would have all penitent sinners, both to *forsake their owne wayes, and their owne imaginations.* Matth. 13. 44.

A second thing in buying is, that we must receive and retaine the thing bought: and so would God have us to hold fast grace when we have got it. Therfore the wise man exhorteth us, *buy the truth, and sell it not: likewise wisdome, & instruction, and understanding.* We may chaffer for other things as we will, buy and sell, & sell and buy, &c. but here we must not doe so: when once we have obtained heavenly wisedome, and gotten Religion in our hearts, we must get as much increase to doe it daily as we can, but never let go any of that we have. And thus much for buying, and the things to be observed therein. Receive and retaine grace. Prov. 23. 23.

A third thing required in the Text, is, that we must *take*, and

and this ſtandeth in excellent proportion with naturall food: If a man come where there is great ſtore of meat, and variety of choiſe wines, and he ſee others have a notable appetite, and himſelfe none; all the cheere that is ſet before him will doe him no good, but rather vexe and trouble him: even ſo it is in the ſpirituall feaſt: and therefore Chriſt exhorteth us ſo often to feede upon him, *take, eate* (ſaith he) ſhewing us what that is, *viz. to beleeve in him*: In which regard he is ſaid to dwell in our hearts by faith: whereas unbeliefe chaſeth him thence, and will let him have no roome, nor place of abode in our ſoules. Therefore let us make account, that as the naturall food is to be received into our ſtomacks, ſo the ſpirituall alſo is to be received into our ſoules, and there to be, as it were, digeſted, before we can benefit by it. And this is only done by a true faith in Chriſt Ieſus.

1 Cor. 11, 24. Ioh. 9. 51.

[*Without ſilver.*] Hence we ſee that God offereth us the greateſt, and moſt excellent things, without *money, or money-worth.*

Doct. 3. God giveth nothing on our deſert. Revel. 22.

The beſt things are beſt cheape.

Nothing can be gotten at a lower rate than things that are of greateſt worth. Therefore are we bid to *drink of the waters of life freely*: and as grace, ſo alſo glory is without any deſert of ours beſtowed on us: for *the gift of God* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *is eternall life*, Rom. 6.

Reaſons.

Now the reaſons why heavenly things are not ſet at ſale, but to be had of free coſt, are theſe:

1 From his glory

Firſt, becauſe God will have the praiſe of his mercy: if hee ſhould take any thing of us, he ſhall loſe a great part of his glory. We are too ready to boaſt now when we are pardoned, ſanctified, and ſaved of his free grace, and not by our owne workes, in that God puts life and ſtrength into us to be onely working inſtruments of our owne happineſſe; what then ſhould we doe, if God ſhould make us our own Saviours, and propoſe heaven unto us at a price, bidding us winne it, and weare it?

2 Our penurie. Epheſ. 2.

God knoweth full well that we have nothing to give, but are meere beggers, and could but pay God with his owne: for in our ſelves we are poor, miſerable, naked, and deſtitute of all

good,

goodneſſe: Indeed we have in us matter enough to deſerve Gods wrath, but none at all to procure his favour.

Thirdly, if we had ſomewhat to give, yet it were in no ſort correſpondent to that which we ſhall receive: for the graces of Gods Spirit, and the Crowne of Glory are unvaluable, ſo that nothing that is in the poſſeſſion of any creature may be laid in the ballance againſt them. Therefore when *Simon Magus* would have bought but one gift of working miracles, to wit, that *on whomſoever hee ſhould lay his hands, he might receive the holy Ghoſt*: *Peter* anſwered, *Thy money periſh with thee, becauſe thou thinkeſt the gift of God may be obtained by money*. Much more then, may this be ſpoken of ſanctifying graces, which are farre more excellent; they are not to be obtained by money, or by any earthly treaſure, for there is no price that can come neare them.

Invaluablenes of Gods gifts.

Act. 8. 19, 20.

For the confutation of Papiſts, that would buy out Heaven by their owne meritorious works: they are even like *Simon Magus* their father, and would rob God of his honour, which he will not give unto any other: plainly manifeſting unto all the world, that they are groſly ignorant of their owne vilenes and wretchedneſſe, and of the worth and excellency of heavenly things.

Vſe 1.

For inſtruction, though we find no manner of goodneſſe, or worthineſſe in our ſelves, yet that ſhall be ſo farre from being any hinderance unto us, that this ſight and ſenſe of our owne ſinfull wants, being joyned with humiliation for them, will greatly further us: for, *Bleſſed are the pure in ſpirit*. God is not like one that keeps an Ordinary, where every one that ſitteth at table muſt pay his ſhot: but he is a royall feaſt-maker that keepeth open houſe for all commers and goers: and he payes beſt that ſeeth he hath nothing at all to pay, and is thereby brought out of all conceit with himſelfe. And this ſhould put an anſwer into our mouthes againſt Satans objection, that we have nothing to ſatisfie God for our offences againſt his majeſty, nor for his mercies offred unto us: we need not any ſuch matter of ſatisfaction, becauſe God would have us buy and eate freely without money, or money worth; and our humble and thankfull acknowledgement of this his bounty and liberalitie,

Matth. 5.

rality, is all the ſatisfaction that he looketh for at our hands.

[*Why do you lay out your ſilver, and not for bread?* &c.] That is, about ſuch things, as for which you are never the better: which will not breed any good bloud, or good nouriſhment; he followeth the former *Metaphor* ſtill, reproving them for their folly, that whereas the Lord doth offer them ſuch good things ſo good cheape, they would neglect and paſſe by them, and rather chaffer with the world, and ſpend their thoughts and paines, about things of no worth, that would no way ſatisfie them: but when they had toyled out themſelves in the purſuite of them, they would be as reſtleſſe, and void of true contentment, as ever before.

Doct. 4. Grace onely contents the minde.

Nothing can ſatisfie, and content the minde but grace.

1 Tim. 6. 6.

Many things there be that make ſhew as if they could do it: but the truth is, all will come too ſhort, and be found too weake for the effecting of it. Therefore the Apoſtle ſaith, that *Godlineſſe is great riches and contentment*. Other riches are of that nature, that the more we have, the more we deſire, and the more our hearts are diſquieted with the care of keeping them, and the feare of loſing them. But true piety is of that force, that it drawes the ſoule unto God, and makes it to reſte on him, and on his treaſures, and there is a ſure ſtay indeed: for he will *never faile nor forſake ſuch as caſt their cares upon him*. That made *David* ſo to rejoyce, when God *lifted up the light of his countenance upon him*: and that cauſed *Paul* in what ſoever eſtate he was, *therewith to be content*. And the reaſon of the doctrine is, becauſe grace onely repaires the image of God (the loſſe whereof was the cauſe of all our woe) according to that ſaying of the Apoſtle, *We all behold as in a mirror the glory of the Lord with open face, and are changed into the ſame image from glory to glory, as by the ſpirit of the Lord*. Whereas looking into other glaſſes, we ſee our owne faces therein; in the holy Goſpell, as in a moſt cleare glaſſe, we ſee the face of Ieſus Chriſt, and by beholding it, are by little and little made conformable unto it. And this image was it which we loſt by *Adams* fall, and with it all ſound contentment: and this may we recover againe in Chriſt, through the hearing of the Word, and with it true peace, and ſetled comfort. Let a man have the com-

Heb. 13. Pſal. 4. 11. Phil. 4. 11.

Reaſons. 1

2 Cor. 3. 18.

Note.

command of all the world, before he hath Gods image ſtamped upon his ſoule, he ſhall have a reſtleſſe heart, becauſe he hath a wicked heart, and ſhall never find true peace nor comfort, till his ſoule be healed, and till Gods holy Image be renued in him. *Adam*, after his eating of the forbidden fruit, had his abode in Paradiſe for a while: but he found that a hell, which was formerly as it were, an heaven unto him: and why? becauſe he had loſt Gods image, and conſequently the ſweet apprehenſion of his favour, which before made all comfortable unto him.

Secondly, nothing can take away ſinne, but grace; now whereſoever ſinne taketh up the place, it expells all quietneſſe from thence, *There is no peace to the wicked, ſaith my God.* Iſa. 57. 21. For when the minde is full of errour, and the heart full of luſt, and the conſcience full of guiltines, there muſt needs be great confuſion, and diſtemper, and unquietneſſe in the whole man. 2

Thirdly, untill grace enter into the heart, and rule there, Satan hath the dominion, and ruleth there as a Tyrant, at his owne will and pleaſure. If he do but ſtirre a wicked man to any ſinfull practice, he is forthwith ready to yeeld unto him: if he do but bid him ſpue out the venome of his poyſoned ſtomacke, he preſently breaketh forth into cruell and bitter ſwearing, or curſing, or rayling, &c. ſo that it may truly be ſaid, *That wicked mens tongues are ſet on fire of hell*; and what reſt then can there be in that ſoule, which is ſo poſſeſſed by Satan, who will never ſuffer his members to deſiſt from inventing, or executing ſome miſchiefe or other? 3 Epheſ. 2. 2. 2 Tim. 2. 26. Iam. 3. 6.

Fourthly, there can be no contentedneſſe in a graceleſſe perſon, becauſe God and he are at warre: for untill ſuch time as men be juſtified by faith, *they have no peace with God*, and therefore none with their owne conſciences: and what eaſe or reſt can be unto them, that have ſuch a worme as is a guilty and accuſing conſcience, alwayes knawing within them, and ſuch a racke ever and anone (when God will) torturing and tormenting them? Surely, if grace and peace do ever go together, (as alwayes they do) then where grace is abſent, peace cannot be preſent, and ſo the ſoule muſt needs be deſtitute of all true contentment. This ſerveth, 4 Rom. 5. 1.

Vſe 1. Psal. 39. 6.

1. For reproofe of thoſe that (as the Prophet ſaith) diſquiet themſelves about a vaine ſhadow: in purſuing this pleaſure and that commodity, and ſuch promotions, and other the like matters, as beſt pleaſe their ſeveral fancies. If they had gained all that they ſeeke for, it could do them no good; for all is but *vanity and vexation of the ſpirit*: a bruit beaſt is farre happier than they, and wel had it been for them, if they had never beene borne; for what *ſhall it profit a man to winne the whole world, and to loſe his owne ſoule?* to be a drudge to every baſe luſt, to waſte and conſume his wit, and ſtrength, and all, and then to have hell for his paines? yet how buſie are moſt men in digging for droſſe, and refuſing gold; in ſeeking earthly things, and deſpiſing heavenly? but what will be the event? Ionah 2. 1. *Such as truſt in lying vanities, forſake their owne mercies.*

2

2. For inſtruction, that we ſhould not ſpend our thoughts and time in the purſuit of vaine and tranſitory things, which can give us no helpe againſt ſinne, nor comfort to our ſoules, nor protection from the curſe and wrath of God: but let us labour for godlineſſe, which will free our hearts from diſcontentment, and repleniſh them with true peace, and everlaſting comforts.

3 *Incline your eares, and come unto me, q. d.* if your eares be dull of hearing, offer an holy violence unto them, that ſo you may attend unto my Word: and what then? *Heare, and your ſoule ſhall live*: this benefit and this promotion is promiſed as the beſt motive to ſtir them up to conſcionable hearing, *viz.* that their ſoules ſhould ſpeed the better for it, that whereas they are dead in ſinne through *Adams* fall, they ſhould be reſtored to the life of grace: whence this doctrine ariſeth, That it is the greateſt happineſſe that can be, to have our ſoules to proſper, and to have the Image of God renewed therein.

Doct. 5.

Inward proſperity is the beſt.

Therefore in the prophecy of *Ezekiel*, when the Lord would magnifie his mercies towards his people, he covenanteth chiefly and principally to beſtow upon them ſpirituall things; *to waſh them from all their filthineſſes*, by the bloud of his owne Sonne; *to give them a new heart and a new ſpirit*, that is, a better judgement, and purer affections; *to take away their ſtony and hard hearts, and to give them fleſhly and tender hearts*, and

Ezek. 36. 25. &c.

in

in a word, overthrow the kingdome of Satan in them, and to governe and guide them by his holy Word, and by his blessed Spirit, that so they might *keepe his judgements and do them.*

To this very purpose the Apostle *Peter* saith, that *most great and precious promises are given unto us, that by them we might be partakers of the godly nature, in that we flye the corruptions which are in the world through lust.* What maketh the promises to be of such singular worth, and of such inestimable value? even this, that *thereby we are made partakers of the divine nature,* and by degrees become like unto Christ himselfe: in this regard, it is said, that *the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour,* to wit, that is not righteous as he is. 2 Pet. 1. 4. Prov. 12.

And the reason why the inward prosperity is the best, is, *Reasons.*

First, because wheresoever that is, sinne, which is the fountain of all misery, is expelled: so that howsoever some reliques thereof do still remaine, yet the dominion thereof is quite abolished, neither shall those remnants of iniquity be charged upon the parties, when grace carrieth the chiefe sway in them. 1

Secondly, those things which make the soule to prosper, *viz.* the graces of Gods Spirit, are most excellent, both in regard of the author of them, and of the nature of them, and of the continuance of them; and therefore are they bestowed only upon the elect: whereas all earthly things being base and vile in comparison of the other, are commonly conferred upon the worst, as well as the best; because the having of them cannot make them happy, nor the wanting of them make them miserable. 2

Vse. Which serveth for the confutation of their folly, who think if they be healthy, and wealthy, & bigge in the world, they enjoy as much prosperity as any one can desire, and much more than those of Gods servants, that are in continuall wants, and weaknesses, and disgraces in the world: but in the middest of their earthly jollity and plenty, how go matters betwixt God and them? what graces of the holy Ghost have they in their soules? what humilitie? what love? what victory over their unruly lusts? what preparation for death? what evidence and assurance of eternall life have these men gotten? nay, for these things, they have not had a thought of them? with-

without queſtion they are farre from true proſperity, whatſoever they themſelves or others may imagine of their happy eſtate and condition of life.

Secondly, here is a ſingular conſolation for the Saints, albeit they be continually exerciſed with ſore croſſes, and bitter temptations, that breake their ſleepe, and their hearts, yet all the while they are hereby brought to that inward and beſt proſperity of the ſoule, they are happy and bleſſed, and have great cauſe to praiſe the Name of the Lord, who hath caſt the downe in the fleſh, that he might exalt them in the Spirit; and afflicted and abaſed their outward man, that he might enrich and beautifie their inward man, with the excellent & amiable vertues of his holy Spirit. The Lord is wonderfull in all his works, and wiſe in all his proceedings: when he purpoſeth to judge and condemne wicked men, he ſetteth many of them on horſe-backe, that their down-fall may be more notorious and infamous: and when he intendeth exceedingly to advance and bleſſe his children, he caſteth them very low, that ſo their riſing may be more admirable and comfortable. He knoweth that it is better for them to have a good conſcience, than a good purſe; a healthfull ſoule, than a ſtrong body, and therefore doth he exerciſe them with ſuch fiery trials and temptations. A good Husband-man will never plow the wilde waſte, but his arrable land, from which he expecteth a good crop: and even ſo dealeth the Lord; he many times paſſeth over ungodly Reprobates, and ploweth and harroweth his beſt-beloved, that ſo their ſoules may beare him a plentifull harveſt of grace: and ſo long as hatred of ſinne, and ſorrow for ſinne, and true humility do grow and flouriſh within, never feare what outward troubles befall you: your gaine that ariſeth thence will make full ſatisfaction for all.

Doct. 6. [*Heare and thy ſoule ſhall live,*] Hence obſerve, That the conſcionable hearing of Gods Word, is that which quickens the ſoule, & makes it to live both the life of grace, & of glory.

Ioh. 5. 24, 25. So ſaith our Saviour, *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, he that heareth my Word, and beleeveth in him that ſent me, hath everlaſting life, and ſhall not come into damnation, but hath paſſed from death unto life.* And againe in the next verſe, *The time*

ſhall

ſhall come, And now is, when the dead, to wit, in ſinnes and treſpaſſes, *ſhall heare the voyce of the Sonne of God, viz.* in your Miniſtery, *and they that heare it ſhall live*. There is not the moſt vile nature, but the Word is of power to change it, and to tranſlate it, from one meaſure of grace unto another. And the reaſon hereof is,

1 Firſt, GOD doth mightily worke in it, and by it, upon the ſoules of men, in regard wherof it is called the power of God to ſave them that beleeve, *Rom.* 1.26. and 2.*Cor.* 10.4. and 5. The weapons of our warfare are mighty through God to caſt downe holds, &c.

2 Secondly, becauſe it is an inſtrument to convey the holy Ghoſt into our hearts, which is the Author, and perfecter of all good gifts in the elect of God. Gal. 3.3.

Vſe 1. Here then we ſee what miſerable caſe they are in, which are deſtitute of the pure and ſincere preaching of the Word, they are utterly dead in ſinne, and have no ſpirituall life, nor ſenſe in them: Yet they eate and drinke, and ſleepe, and live merrily as others do. So they may, and yet their ſoules go to hell, and dye the ſecond death, becauſe they were never partakers of the firſt reſurrection. Then a man begins to live, when hee underſtands the promiſes and beleeves them: when hee knows the commandements, and obſerves them: and till then he ſits in darkneſſe, and in the ſhadow of death, and is in ſo much more lamentable taking, by how much more ſenſeleſſe he is of that danger wherein he ſtandeth. *Objection. Anſwer.*

Let us then bewaile their eſtate that are deprived of the light, and pray unto the Lord to overthrow the ſecret plots and practiſes of all that are Popiſhly affected, and that do ſeek to deprive men of the light: for they intend a farre greater miſchiefe unto them, than if they went about to pull the Sunne out of the firmament.

3 Secondly, this maketh for the great comfort of them that finde in themſelves much deadneſſe, and hardneſſe of heart: let them repaire unto the Word, which is able to quicken them, and will quicken them, if they come with honeſt hearts thereunto. Earthly Princes lawes do onely binde men to be honeſt, but

Rules. but Gods lawes will make them such as they bid them to be; alwayes provided that they come thereunto.

1 First, with preparation, setting themselves with reverence as in the Lords owne presence. *Eccl.* 5.

2 Secondly, with attention, hiding the Word in their hearts as a precious treasure, *Psal.* 119. *Part.* 2.

3 Thirdly, with an expectation of good successe in the end, though God make them wait for a time, *Psalme* 1.2,3. *Psal.* 119.9.

THE

THE SIXT Sermon.

MAITH. 22. 11. &c.

Verſe 11. *Then the King came in to ſee the gueſts, & ſaw there a man which had not on a wedding garment.*

12 *And he ſaid unto him, Friend, how cameſt thou in hither, and haſt not on a wedding garment? and he was ſpeechleſſe.*

13 *Then ſaid the King to the ſervants, Bind him hand and foot: and take him away, and caſt him into utter darkeneſſe: there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth.*

IN the former part of this Chapter, is ſet forth the marvellous goodneſſe and favour of the Lord towards the Nation of the *Iewes*, under the Parable of a King inviting gueſts unto the marriage-feaſt of his ſon; and withall, their horrible unthankfulnes, in making light of it, and refuſing to come, preferring their profits and pleaſures before the means of their ſalvation, wherunto they were called: which indignity & ingratitude of theirs towards the King of heaven, together with their barbarous cruelty againſt his meſſengers, is further ſet out by the puniſhment inflicted upon them, which was, *the King being wroth ſent forth his warriours, deſtroyed them, and burnt up their City*: In which words our Saviour hath reference unto the deſtruction of that Nation, and of their City, by the *Romanes*, who were called Gods warriours, becauſe howſoever they came againſt the *Iewes* in malice Connexion.

malice and revenge, yet God had a ſpecial hand in ordering & diſpoſing of all that they did; ſo the greateſt part of the people was utterly cut off, and the reſt left under a heavy ſtroke even unto this day, being deſtitute of the means of ſalvation, which they cõtemptuouſly rejected, when they were offred unto the.

But howſoever theſe that were firſt bidden would not come to the Supper, yet the Lord would not bee unfurniſhed of gueſts, and therefore he ſends his Miniſters unto the *Gentiles*; which ſate in darknes, and in the ſhadow of death, who made their uſe of Gods meſſage, and came abundantly to the feaſt; ſo that the wedding was furniſhed with gueſts, ſome good, & ſome bad. Thus farre the Meſſengers had good ſucceſſe, that multitudes made profeſſiõ, as if they were deſirous to live under Chriſt his government, and to feede of his Supper, though many of them did it with falſe and hypocriticall hearts.

The interpretation.

Having thus ſhewed what the Meſſengers did, our Saviour next declared what the King himſelfe did; the place being filled with gueſts, [*he came to ſee the gueſts,*] implying that when men begin to make profeſſion, God uſeth a more diligent ſearch and examination than his Miniſters can doe: for they can but judge of men by their actions; but the Lord dealeth immediately with their hearts and conſciences. And therfore it is added, that when he came in, *he ſaw* (that which the Miniſters did not) [*a man which had not on a wedding garment,*] where we muſt not conceiue that there was but one ſuch preſent (for it is afterwards ſaid, *that many are called, but few are choſen*, ver. 14. but this is the meaning, that if there be but one hypocrite amongſt many thouſands, God will finde him out, and ſingle him from amongſt the reſt.

The party being thus taken, the Lord falleth to an examinatiõ of him, *Friend*, ſaith he, (*how cameſt thou hither?*) that is, how dareſt thou come to the Royal Table of ſo glorious a King (& *haſt not on a wedding garment?*) that is, having no repentance for ſinne; no freedome from the guilt, or from the power of ſinne; nor any ſaving grace at all: how is it (I ſay) that thou ſhouldeſt preſume to come into ſuch a place, and into ſuch a preſence, having made no better preparation?

When God began thus to examine him in his own perſon,

it is ſaid (*he was ſpeechleſſe*) having an ill cauſe and a guilty conſcience, he had nothing to ſay for himſelfe. Hereupon the Lord proceedeth to paſſe ſentence upon him, which is done after the manner of earthly Iudges. (*Then ſaid the King unto his ſervants*) that is, unto the Angels, whoſe office it is, as to gather the good corne into Gods Barne, ſo to bind the Tares together in bundles, that they may be caſt into hell-fire; (*bind him hand and foot*) there muſt not be preſent execution, but he muſt be dealt with as a priſoner, whoſe hands are bound that he may not reſiſt: and his feet that hee may not runne away; if either of them had beene at libertie, he might have made ſome ſhift; but when God comes to proceed in judgement againſt men, hee will ſtrip them of all meanes, both of defence and of eſcaping. Further, they are bid to (*take him away*) to wit, from having communion with God, with his Saints or Angels; hee muſt be taken from the place and meanes of all comfort and peace, and happineſſe: and is that all? nay (ſaith God, *caſt him into utter darkneſſe*) that is, into hell, a place of all miſery and woe, which is implyed by utter darkeneſſe: a fit puniſhment for ſuch kinde of perſons; for ſeeing they are full of ignorance, and of ſpirituall darkneſſe while they live, God hath provided that they ſhall have enough of it; they ſhall be caſt into a place of utter darkneſſe, where there ſhall be nothing but horrour and anguiſh. And yet if this were al, their eſtate were the more tolerable; but this addeth unto the miſery of the place, that they ſhall be very ſenſible of that miſery, which is intimated, when it is ſaid, (*there ſhal be weeping*) not ſuch weeping as many times befalleth men here, when the tears of their eyes abate the anguiſh of their harts: but ſuch weeping as is joyned with (*gnaſhing of the teeth*) ſignifying that they ſhould not onely have ſorrow and griefe, but ſuch as ſhould be mingled with deſperation, and with horrible vexation, and torture: not ſuch as ſhould be an eaſe unto their ſoules, but rather an addition unto their woe.

In theſe words then is declared the ſeveritie of God againſt thoſe that come unworthily unto his royall feaſt: where is ſhewed,

1 Firſt, the cauſe of this his ſeveritie; namely, becauſe they

abuſed

abused both him and his banquet, in comming with the most foule and loathsome garments of the old man; which do more displease rhe eyes of the Lord, than the most base and beggarly rayment in the world can doe the eyes of an earthly King.

2 Secondly, the manner of Gods proceeding, *viz.*

1 That he convinceth their consciences, so that they are speechlesse.

2 That he condemneth their persons anto unavoidable, yet unsupportable torments.

Verse 11. [*Then the King came in.*] From this title which is attributed unto the Lord, this doctrine ariseth: that,

Doct. 1. God is the onely absolute King over all the world:

God the King of the whole world. 1 Tim. 6. 15. He it is that is *blessed, and Prince, the King of Kings, & Lord of Lords.* This *Nebuchadnezzar* acknowledged, after that the Lord had made him, being the mightiest Monarch in the world, to become more wretched than the poorest man in the world, living as a beast for 7. years together: after that (I say) the Lord had abased him, and raised him up again, he acknowledged that God was the King of all the earth, whereas hee thought before that he himselfe had beene the onely Ruler & Commander of the world: and further he sheweth, what manner of King he is, namely, the most high, everlasting, of an unresistable power, so that all the inhabitants of the earth are to be reputed as nothing, in comparison of him. Dan. 4. 31. 32.

Reason. And the reason why the Lord doth challenge unto himselfe this title to be the onely absolute Governour of all the world, is this, that all power whatsoever, is derived from him, and limited by him: so that all earthly Potentates are but his substitutes and Vicegerents: they hold their Kingdomes from him; their subjects harts are inclined by him: al their excellent parts are his meere gifts: their wisedome & policy for government both in times of warre, and of peace, proceed altogether from him, & the successe of al their purposes and attempts is wholly ordered and disposed by him: and therefore good cause is there that he should have this glory and honour ascribed unto him, *viz.* to be the supreme Ruler of all the earth.

Vse 1. This reprooveth them, that in words will acknowledge the Lord to be the onely Ruler of Heaven and Earth, but in

their

their deeds deny it: for what doe they? never care to get the knowledge of his Lawes, much lesse to obey them: nay, they refuse to understand the Statutes of the Lord, and rise up in open rebellion against him: and yet none more ready than such to cry out of others, that they are disloyall Subjects, such as care not for authority, and the like. Indeede those that are such, are much to be condemned. But in truth, they themselves in the meane while are the notablest rebels, in that they stand out against the LORD of Hosts. But they will vaunt and boast that they carry themselves loyally towards their Prince, and are carefull to obey Authoritie. Suppose for the time that they doe yeeld outward obedience to the lawes (which yet few such doe) yet if they do not submit themselves to Magistrates, in, and for the Lord, all their loyalty is nothing worth. For the Apostle *Jude* speaketh of some that had *mens persons in admiration, because of advantage*, against whom he pronounceth a woe: they would fawne upon such as were in authority, and have them in high admiration. Oh they were worthy men, and their commandements much to be respected: so that if they would have them lye, or swear, or commit any villany, they would bee at their becke: and why? for their owne advantage: that they might get some commodity, or clime to some preferment, &c. that was their drift, and further than to serve themselves, they regarded neither the persons nor places of those that were in the government: all their crouching was for advantage sake, nothing for conscience sake. Iude 16.

Secondly, sithence our God is the Soveraigne Lord and King of heaven and earth: therefore when wee are to stand in his presence, and to draw neere unto his Table: let us with all reverence and due preparation, and with all feare and care, and good conscience, present our selves before his Majestie. The holy Ghost himselfe giveth this advice concerning an earthly Prince, that if any be to sit at Table with a great Ruler, he should looke unto his carriage, and restraine his appetite, and not behave himselfe rudely and unmannerly. Now if this be a point of wisedome, when a man is to feast with one that is farre his Superiour, to wash his hands, to have respect Vse 2. Pro. 23. 1.

of his apparell, and if he have any ſute better than another, to put that on; and in no ſort to carry himſelfe diſorderly and unbeſeeming ſuch a preſence: if (I ſay) a man would & ſhould deale thus before an earthly Prince, that if there be any failing, can but give him a rebuke and check, or inflict upon him ſome outward puniſhment; how much more carefull and circumſpect ſhould we be, when we are to ſit at the Lords Table, who looketh not ſo much to the externall behaviour, as to the inward diſpoſition of the ſoule? and if he finde us unprepared and unworthy, cannot onely ſmite us in the outward man, but caſt both body and ſoule into hell.

Vſe 3. Thirdly, this is for ſingular comfort unto all Gods people, ſeeing the Lord their God is the only Monarch of the world, that exerciſeth his Kingdome from generation to generation, this ſhould ſtrengthen them againſt all croſſes, and loſſes, and troubles, and temptations, that though men would toſſe them up and down, and trample them under their feet, and for that end doe evermore plot and practiſe againſt them, yet it ſhall goe well with the righteous: for the Lord raigneth over their moſt mortall adverſaries: and though the times change, and mens affections change, yet their King is unchangeable; the ſame for ever, in mercy & goodneſſe towards all his true hearted Subjects; he hath turned every thing to the good of his Church heretofore, and ſo will he deale with his faithfull ſervants ſtill, even to the end of the world. And thus much of the perſon of God, that he is a King.

Now for his behaviour, he doth not onely provide for his gueſts, but is there preſent himſelfe (in the aſſembly of Saints) [*to ſee the gueſts*:] not, but beſide them before: but this is ſpoken for our capacitie, to ſignifie that as God doth ſee through us, ſo he will let men know, and feele, and finde, that he perfectly diſcerneth what they are, and with what hearts they appeare before him. Whence ariſeth this point: that,

Doct. 1. Gods eye is upon all his gueſts.

The Lord taketh ſpeciall notice of every gueſt that commeth to his Feaſt.

There are many commers, but not all of one diſpoſition: therefore doth he take a view of them, that their entertainment may be according to their condition and preparation:

that if they be good, they may ſpeed well; if bad, they may receive according to their ill deſerts.

This is euident in *Zephania*, where it is ſaid, that *the Lord will ſearch Ieruſalem with lights*: not that the Lord needeth candles or Torches; but to ſhew that there are many dark corners in mens hearts, where ſinne lyes lurking: which if they will not ſearch, the Lord will, and finde out every corruption therein, as men by burning Lampes come to the ſight of ſuch things as lye hidden in obſcure and darke corners. To the ſame purpoſe it is ſaid, that *all things are naked and open to his eyes*: and that his eyes are a flame of fire; noting unto us, that he pierceth and looketh through and through every mans heart, every mans conſcience, and every mans converſation. Zeph. 1. 12. Heb. 4. 13.

Reaſons: Firſt, the Lord hath undertaken to bring every ſecret thing into iudgement: therefore muſt he needs take notice thereof. *Reaſons.* 1 Eccl. 12. 2

2 Secondly, it is his office to reward every one as he knoweth his heart and his works: and therefore muſt he of neceſſity ſearch into the ſame; for otherwiſe he could not proceede like a righteous Iudge, to give to every one an equall and perfect reward. Which maketh, See M. *Clever's* Sermon on Ioh. 6. *Doct.* 2.

Where this point is more largely handled.

Firſt, for reproofe of thoſe, that becauſe they are admitted by the Miniſter, and allowed amongſt men, and iudged to be Chriſtians, as men that can be touched for no groſſe ſin; have a very good opinion of themſelves, as if there were nothing elſe required of them: but let ſuch know, that there muſt bee a ſecond ſurvey and ſearch; and where the Miniſter ends, God will begin; and if they cannot hold out in the ſecond examination, and tryall made by the Lord, their caſe will be no better than his, who is found ſitting at the Table without a wedding garment: therefore it ſtands men upon to ſee that they bee fitly qualified, before they intrude themſelves into the Lords preſence: for he hath fiery eyes to looke quite through them; and pure eyes that can indure no iniquity in them; and therefore before they come to this great Supper, they muſt by ſearching finde out their ſpeciall ſinnes and bewaile them, determining to leave and forſake them, and repayring to the meanes to get ſtrength againſt them. *Note.* *Vſe* 1. Heb. 4.

Secondly, for consolation: seeing wee shall not meete the Minister onely at the Lords Table, but God himselfe in his owne person; this may comfort the hearts of those that have examined their soules, and lamented their sinnes, and have a true desire to be reconciled unto the Lord, and to obtain such mercies as doe belong to penitent persons, they shall receive according to their hearts desire & expectation, even strength against their corruptions & temptations, and freedome from, or ability under all manner of crosses and afflictions: for there the Lord of Glory will manifest his presence, in giving to every one, as he knoweth the integrity of his heart. Earthly Kings, though they be present, cannot looke on every particular person nor examine of what Country or condition every one of them is: but the King of Heaven hath an eye to every guest, considering what they are, and how affected and prepared: what they did the day before, what thoughts they had, what prayers they made the night before, and that very morning: he marketh and observeth what their hopes are, what their desires are, what they expect for the present, and what they purpose for afterwards: In a word, hee taketh particular notice of every good thing in his Saints, to reward it, and of every infirmity to helpe them out of it.

2. Chro. 6. 30.

Note.

[*And saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment.*] In that the King seeing this man at his Table, doth reprove him, and condemne him, for his want of good preparation; the Doctrine is, that,

Doct. 3. Fitnesse requisite in Gods guests.

It is not sufficient to come to Gods wedding-feast, but we must come as fit guests for so great a banquet, and such a glorious presence.

Iudas ate and dranke the blessed bread and Wine, as well as *Peter*; yet because he had a cursed and carnall heart, it was his bane, and laid him more open to every hellish temptation, and made him more lyable to every curse and plague of God: this was all that he got by it. So the foolish Virgins went to meet the Bridegroome, with Lampes in their hands, making a glorious shew, & doing many things in the worship and service of God, yet because they had not Oyle in their Vessels; as well as in their Lamps, that is, had not inward graces in their hearts,

Matth. 25.

and

and consciences, as well as outward semblances and shewes thereof in their carriage and behaviour, therefore their lights were quickly out, and when others were received as fit and meet guests, they were rejected and excluded, as unfit and unworthy of the Bridegroomes feast and company: so that outward termes and colours of Religion will not serve the turne; many shall cry, Lord, Lord, who yet shall be bid to depart from Christ, because they are workers of iniquitie: They brag they have *prophecied and cast out devils, and done many great works by his name*, but they did nothing for his name, but for their owne credit, or gaine, or for some carnall respect or other; and therefore seeking and serving themselves, the Lord esteemeth them wicked and ungodly persons, and punisheth them accordingly. Mat. 7. 22, 23.

Now the reason of this point, is, because the Lord commandeth us as well to come worthily, as to come: and as the prayers of the wicked are an abomination unto him, so are all other services of theirs: *to the uncleane all things are uncleane*: if men be dead in sinnes and trespasses, and live under the power of presumptuous sinnes, the things that are most helpfull and profitable in themselves, are made hurtfull and pernicious unto them, so that they are thereby made more impure and more unholy. *Reasons.* Prov. 28. 9. Tit. 1. 15.

Sith there will be such strict examination, and such a sharpe sentence of condemnation past upon those that do not get them wedding apparell, when they come to this wedding feast: this serveth to humble every one that hath at any time come to this royall feast without his wedding garment; as every one hath, so often as he came to any of the meanes of salvation before he was effectually called. It was Gods wonderfull mercy that we are not destroyed in the time of our unregeneracie, for abusing his gracious and glorious presence; and that he did so patiently forbeare us, and at length put it into our hearts, to put off our foule garments, and to sue unto him for white and pure rayment. And albeit the Lord have graciously spared us, yet should we judge our selves worthy to have beene destroyed, and ought to be humbled for our old sinnes, lest they bring upon us new judgements. *Vse 1.* *Note.* Rev. 3. 18.

Vse 1.

Secondly, let us labour to put on this wedding-garment, seeing it is so requisite and needfull for every worshipper of God to be clothed therewith.

What the Wedding-garment is.

Now if we would know what it is, the Apostle describeth it in part, *Col. 3. 12. Now therefore as the Elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercy*, &c. As if he had said, sith God hath chosen you to eternall glory in the heavens, and provided unto you a kingdome, that you may raigne with his own Sonne, therefore do you leade such a life as becomes heires of such a kingdome, and adorne your selves with such graces as may beseeme the Spouse of Christ, and those that are the chosen people of the Lord, even such as are called unto holinesse, and unto whom God hath manifested his love: and seeing he hath forgiven you so many sinnes, and doth continually passe by so many of your infirmities, do you put on *tender mercy*, &c. He reckoneth up divers of those particular vertues, whereby he would have them shine forth before men; and first he willeth them to put on (*tender mercy*) not onely to have, but to put on a mercifull heart: many have this grace, which do not put it on, that is, do not stir up their hearts, nor make them sensible of the wants and necessities, and distresses of their poore brethren: the bowels of compassion are not so moved within them, that they out of a fellow-feeling of their griefes, do proceed from pitying of them, to relieving of them: but the Apostle would have men so to be endued with these graces, that they put them forth for the use of others, as occasion is offered.

The next vertue which we must put on, is (*kindnesse*) we must not be fierce, nor froward, tart nor sowre in our speeches or carriage, but be affable, and amiable in our conversation, that so we may not discourage, nor discountenance those that have to speake or deale with us.

But how may we attaine this kindnesse? get (*humblenesse*) which is the next vertue: for whence commeth it to passe that men are so harsh and rough, so lowd and full of crying in their speeches? the very true reason is because they are proud and haughty: therefore the same minde should be in us, that was in Christ Iesus who was full of gentlenes, and still ready to beare with infirmities, to passe by offences, and pray for his foreit adversaries.

The next grace is [*meekneſſe*] which conſiſteth in this, that we be not buſie and violent in our owne private matters, but content to part with our owne right, ſo farre as Gods glorie and a good conſcience do require.

Another vertue is [*long-ſuffering,*] which is fitly joyned with the former: for ſome might ſay, I have ſhewed meeknes and peaceableneſſe in my behaviour, but all will not ſerve the turne, I am ever vexed with unkindneſſe and indignities, and muſt I ſtill put up all? Yes ſurely, you muſt ſuffer long, therein imitating the Lord himſelfe: for hath he not borne long with you, did not he ſpare you many yeares before your converſion? and are you ſo reformed now, that you need not his long-ſuffering and patience? *Objection.* *Anſw.*

Oh, but thoſe with whom I have to deale are very full of infirmities and defects. Beare with them then, *Ver.* 13. you are not without imperfections your ſelfe; they put you to the triall now; you know not how ſoone you may winne them or ſome others to the like, and therefore ſtrive to beare with them, and ſeeke rather to mend faults, than to find faults: and to help men out of them, rather than to be imbittered againſt them for the ſame. *Objection.* *Anſw.*

But there is a quarrell betwixt us, and I cannot bring my minde to peace, till that be firſt ended. The Apoſtle telleth you how to make briefe worke, and how to make the beſt, cheapeſt, and moſt Chriſtian end of all controverſies, and that is, [*freely to forgive one another.*] *Objection.* *Anſwer.*

But who could ever put up ſuch wrongs, and ſit downe by ſuch injuries? Chriſt Ieſus could, and did: and therefore it is added, *Even Chriſt Jeſus forgave you, even ſo do ye.* There is none of the Elect of God, but muſt be driven to confeſſe, that our Saviour hath paſſed by farre greater matters in us, than we can do in any man: yea, and doth ſo ſtill, even every day and houre, or elſe it would go full ill with us: which being ſo, they ſhould not ſticke to forgive and forget one anothers treſpaſſes and offences, of what kinde, and of what degree ſoever. *Objection.* *Anſw.*

These vertues if we can get and exerciſe, it is certaine that we have the wedding garment, and therefore may boldly and com-

comfortably ſtand before him that hath pure and fiery eyes: for ſay that he hates all iniquity (as indeed he doth) with a deadly hatred: if we do ſo too, God and we are of one minde, and of one ſide, and he will never lay any of our ſinnes unto our charge.

Who muſt beſtow the Wedding garment,

Thus have we heard what the wedding garment is: now it is further to be conſidered, how we may come by it: and the way is, to go unto Chriſt Ieſus for it: for his Spouſe muſt be clothed and decked by himſelf, who is the Bridegroome: and

Rev. 3. 17, 18. therefore he exhorteth the Church of the *Laodiceans* that was *poore, and miſerable, and blind, and* [*naked*] *to buy of him* [*white rayment.*] which is the *righteouſneſſe of Saints, Rev.* 19. 8 *that their filthy nakednes might not appeare*, but be covered through

Pſal. 32. the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, which maketh us as righteous here in Gods account, as we ſhall be, when we come to heaven, though we cannot ſee it ſo clearly, nor apprehend it ſo fully. Now we ſee where it may be bought: the next queſtion will be, how it muſt be bought?

How it muſt be gotten.

And for anſwer thereunto: we muſt know that three things are to be performed.

1

Put off our rags.

Ephes. 4. 22.

The firſt is, that we muſt put off our owne filthy and ragged clothes, to wit, our ſinfull and corrupt natures, and our bad and vile converſation, as the Apoſtle willeth the *Epheſians, Caſt ye off, concerning the converſation in time paſt, the old man, which is corrupt through the deceiveable luſts.* This then is the firſt duty, by ſound and hearty repentance to make a riddance of all groſſe ſinnes, and to purge our ſelves as much as poſſibly we can, from all infirmities: for certaine it is that the wedding garment cannot be obtained, untill we be fit for the ſame. The old man and the new will not agree together. Wherefore when the Propher *Iſaiah* exhorteth men to come

Iſa. 5. 5. 7. and buy, &c. he ſaith, *Let the wicked forſake his wayes, and the ungodly his owne imaginations*, &c. Now when we forſake them, when with purpoſe of heart we cleave unto the Lord, and endeavour to depart from all iniquity.

3

Deſire it.

The next thing required of him that would buy this white raiment is, that he muſt much eſteeme & deſire it: for the thirſty ſoule alone ſhall be ſatisfied with good things. Now that

we

we may get this spirituall affection, we must labour to have a sight of our miserable estate while we are naked and destitute of this rayment, and of our happy case when we shall be adorned therewith, which being well considered of, will make us more to affect it, than all the treasures of the world. Isa. 55.12.

3 Seeke it where it may be had.

Thirdly, he that would be a good chap-man, and procure himselfe these heavenly robes, must come to the places and shops where he may buy and have choice for his mony: which are, where the Word is powerfully preached, and the Sacraments duly administred. Thence must these robes be fetcht, whereby all naked soules may be covered, and the most deformed creature may be beautified: the word is it which worketh Grace, and together with the Sacraments doth continually increase the same: so that thereby the Lord conveyeth unto us whatsoever legacies Christ hath deserved for us. And thus we see how the wedding garment may be come by: our owne ragges must be rejected, this must be desired and sought for where it is to be found and to be obtained. Iam. 1.8. 1 Cor. 10.16.

Vse 3. A third use of this point may be for an exceeding great comfort unto them that have put away their sinnes by godly sorrow, and have gotten an appetite to the food of their soules, they may come as welcome guests, and such as have put on the wedding-garment: they need not be afraid that God should look upon them, but have great cause to rejoyce that they are so fitted and prepared, that they may comfortably stand in his blessed presence, and be worthy partakers of his royall feast.

Vse 4. Lastly, this is for terror unto those hypocrites, who though the Lord do call upon them, and proffer them his Sonne, and his Spirit, and his kingdome, yet they will not part with any sin, for the obtaining of these excellent things; but have their appetites so taken up with earthly things, that they have no mind to spirituall things, neither will they come to the means, nor repaire to the market where this royall clothing is to be had; but absent themselves from the word, and especially from the Sacrament. These are much to be condemned and sharply to be rebuked, as despisers of the holy things of God.

Obiection. Oh, but one lives in malice, and another in uncleanness, &c. and therefore they forbeare comming.

This

Answer. This is the most wretched excuse of all: why doest thou not get out of thy malice, and leave thy filthinesse? wilt thou preferre the satisfying of thy lust, before the saving of thy soule? what is this but plainly to refuse and to reject the Lords banquet? and can such looke to escape the heavy hand of the Lord? If they were worthy to be destroyed, that stayed away upon this pretence, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come: I have bought Oxen, and therefore I cannot come: What then do they deserve, that will absent themselves under this colour, I live in malice, and therefore I cannot come: I must follow my sensuall and divelish lust, and therefore I cannot come: If the workes of our Callings may not in any case keepe us from the Lords Feast: then much lesse may the works of the flesh, and of the Devill.

Note. Luk. 14.

Doct. 4. God deales in a peaceable manner even with sinners. Gen. 3. 9.

Verse 12. (*Friend, how camest thou in hither?*) *Doctrine.* When God hath to deale even against wicked sinners; yet he doth plainly, and in peaceable tearmes convince them, before he passeth sentence on them for their faults. So hee dealt with *Adam*, when he had eaten the forbidden fruit, and thereupon fled from God, and hid himselfe among the trees of the Garden. *Adam* (saith he) *where art thou?* q.d. why doest thou flie from me, and leave the place of thy calling? *Hast thou not eaten of the tree whereof I commanded that thou shouldest not eate.* He comes not upon him in violence or fury, but quietly cals him by his name, and in a coole manner reasons the matter with him. In like manner deales Christ with *Judas*, *Friend betraiest thou the Son of man with a kisse?* as if he should have said, *Iudas* howsoever this kisse may seeme to proceed from love, yet indeed it cometh from pretensed malice & mischiefe.

Reasons. The reasons why God taketh this course, are;

1 First, because this milde and gentle dealing maketh men see their faults more evidently; whereas, hasty and violent speeches do either discourage, or imbitter the heart, and cast such a mist upon the minde, that it cannot so well discerne of it owne errour.

2 Secondly, if there be proceeding to punishment, the punisher is much cleared by this meanes: for when the offence is quietly laid open to the view of the offender, so that he cannot but con-

confesse his guiltinesse, then must he needs acknowledge that he is justly and equally dealt with, when punishment is inflicted upon him.

This is for our imitation, that if we would have any partie set downe and humbled for his sinne, we should endeavour in the quietest and best manner to convince him of his fault. Vse as hard arguments as we will (for so the Lord doth) but withall look that we use soft speeches: for that is the way to make men thinke hardly of themselves; whereas the contrary will cause them to think hardly of us. And here are such to be blamed, as when any thing is distastfull to them, are presently hot and boistrous, and lowd, and full of crying: and so rather hurt the eare by the lowdnesse of the voice, than helpe the heart by the force of their reproofe: whence arise these two inconveniences: First, that the party looks not so much to his owne falling, as to their passion: and secondly, as he is not convinced, so they are not esteemed: but though they have the right on their side, yet they lose the due regard of their cause, and reverence of their persons. And therefore the Apostle telleth *Timothy*, that the servant of God must not *strive*, but *must be gentle towards all men*: he must not be clamorous and violent, but *suffer evill men patiently, instructing them with meekenes that are contrary minded*, &c. For this is the way, if there be any, to bring them to sound repentance, that they may come out of the snares of the devil. This (I say) is the way, to let them see good reasons against their sins, and a good affection towards their persons: these are the best helps, and hereby we shall be sure to please God: and if the party will ever be broken, it must be by the weight of good arguments, pressed in meeknesse of wisedome, and proceeding from a mercifull heart.

Vse 1.

2 Tim. 2. 24. 25.

But they are vile and wicked persons, with whom I am to deale, such as deserve little or no mildnes at all. Be it so: yet we see here when God was to reason with a reprobate that was ready to be turned into hell, he proceedeth calmly and quietly against him. And so dealt *Iosua* with *Achan* that had committed such execrable wickednesse, as that the whole host of God sped the worse for him: *My son* (saith he) *I beseech thee give glory unto the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him,*

Obiection.
Answer.

Vse 2. *him,&c.* Secondly, this is for consolation. Will the Lord give such good termes unto reprobates that are to be cast into hell-fire? then surely he will much more use mildnesse towards his people: if Gods enemies have good words from him, then what may his friends expect at his hands?

Doct. 5. Sinners shall be put to silence.

[*And he was speechlesse*] *Doct.* Though sinners have many excuses and colours, when they are to deale with men like themselves, yet when God commeth to examine and sift their consciences, they shall have nothing to say for themselves.

This is to be observed in *Judas*, that though he were very subtle, and a notable cunning hypocrite, yet when the Lord wakened his drowsie conscience, he brake forth into a plaine confession, *I have sinned betraying innocent blood.* He had no manner of defence or apology for himselfe in the world.

Mat. 27. 4.

The like may be seene in cursed *Pharaoh*, who in his extremities was driven to confesse that he & his people had sinned, *Exod.* 19. 27. And at the last day it is said, that the books of all mens consciences shall be opened, *Rev.* 20. 12. And then their sinnes shall be set in order before them, and their owne hearts shal be as a thousand witnesses to accuse and condemne them.

Reason. The reason of this point is, because the Conscience is the Lords Officer, and it cannot but speake truth when God will have it, through the light of knowledge which he hath put into every mans soule by nature.

Vse. If then we would be able to stand before the Lord, when he shall come to try us in the fire of affliction, but especially at the last dreadfull day of judgement, when the bookes shall be laid open, and every man shall be judged according to his works: then let us take that course which will make us able to do so: and that is, to get a lively faith, a good conscience, and holy and sound love, and to testifie our loving heart, by our loving behaviour; not to love in word alone, but in deed. *Thereby shall we assure our hearts before him, and have boldnesse in the Day of judgement.* 1. Ioh. 3. 18, 19. Chap. 5. 17. So that pure and Christian love with the fruits of it, is the best meanes to make us with confidence and comfort, to hold up our heads in the day of accounts.

Secondly, this is for comfort against all the false clamors and accusations that are raised against Gods servants: the wicked

here

here have great matters to charge them with, and have much to say for their unrighteous proceeding: but at the day of the Lords reckoning, they that have most to say now, shall have least to say for themselves, and little doth any know how soon he may be called unto the barre. Therefore let Gods children commend themselves unto God in well-doing: he is the great Iudge of the whole world, and with him righteous men shall have good hearing in their just and righteous causes, and all evill men shall be put to silence. Godly men shall lift up their heads with glory, and wicked sinners shall stop their mouths with shame.

Verse 13. [*Binde him hand and foot.*] Hitherto of the examination, and conviction of him that had not on a wedding garment. Now followeth his sentence, well befitting the party offending. [*Binde him hand and foot:*] he had abused his hands and feet, and dishonoured God by his whole body, and therefore just it is that he should be punished therein: [*Take him away:*] because he had onely beene in the Church, but not of the Church, at the meanes, but not profited by them; therefore must he now be separated from all communion with God or his Saints: [*And cast him into utter darknesse:*] Seeing hee loved darknesse more than light, therfore he shal have enough of it? he must be cast into a hell of darknesse.

Out of all which, this generall point may be noted, that the speciall time and place of the punishment of wicked men is after this life in hell fire: here ungodly men have liberty both of hand & foot, and the Saints of God are in greater restraint: but why is that? because sinners shall never have their full measure of woe, till they be cast bodies and soules into hell fire; at which time they shall be made capable of the extremitie of all miseries, because then their iniquities are growne to a full height and ripenesse.

Doct. 6. When and where wicked mens chiefe punishment shall be.

This is evident in the Gospell, where it is shewed, that after the generall Assises at the last day, the ungodly of the world *shal goe into everlasting paine*, Math. 25. 46. and the like is testified by *Daniel, chap.* 12. 2. who saith, *Many of them that sleepe in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and perpetuall contempt*: here they taste of Gods displea-

displeasure sundry times, and in sundry sorts, but there it shall be poured upon them in full measure.

Vse 1. Therefore let us never envy their prosperity, nor think that God taketh no notice of their sinnes, because he delayeth to inflict punishment upon them for the same. Iudges doe cause notorious Malefactors to be reprived sometimes, but it is in no great favour unto them, though in the meane time, it may bee, they sharpely correct their owne children: so doth the Lord deale, severely chastising those that are of his owne family, but letting reprobates thrive in their sinfull wayes, that in the end he may pay them home for all.

Vse 2. Secondly, sith wicked mens punishment shall be principally in hell, and the Church shall never be fully rid of them till than: Therefore let us not be discouraged, though for a while Tares be mingled with the Wheate, there is some use of them, and God seeth that wee have need of such launders now and than, while we remaine upon the face of the earth; but when we come to heaven, we shall be quite freed from them: and therefore in the meane time let us not bee discouraged, as though we should never be freed from them; but let us waite Gods time, when he shall command his holy Angels to separate them from amongst us, and to give them their due in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone for ever.

Vse 3. Thirdly, let us observe this from the contrary, that as wicked mens full judgement, so godly mens full payment is deferred till the last day. They have many comfortable refreshings here, but at that day they shall have fulnesse of joy, holines and glory that shall indure for evermore.

As sinners at that time shall be deprived of all good things, and be vexed with all manner of evils; so the Saints on the other side, shall bee exempted from all evill, and be brought to the enjoyment of all good: as sinners shall bee perfectly miserable, so shall the Saints bee perfectly happy: as the one shall be sensible of their wretchednesse, so shall the other bee of their blessednesse: and as the one shall be everlastingly miserable, so shall the other be eternally happy: in a word, there shall bee every way as much joy and felicitie in heaven (and more too) than there shall be woe and anguish in hell. Which

should

ſhould ſtay us from fainting under our croſſes and ſorrowes, our temptations and corruptions: wee can eaſily thinke that wicked men have an ill bargaine, though they enjoy the pleaſures of ſinne for a ſeaſon, beeauſe they muſt come to ſuch torments in the end: and, why ſhould not we judge, that we have a good bargain, though we paſſe through the fire, and be in the Lords furnace for a while, ſith we ſhall attaine to ſuch joyes at laſt, as farre ſurpaſſe the reach of any mortall man. *Note.*

FINIS.

from fainting under our cradles and sorrows,
our temptations and corruptions: wee can easily thinke that
wicked men have and will bargaine, though they enjoy the plea-
sures of time for a season, because they must come to such tor-
ments in the end: and, why should not we judge, that
we have a good bargain, though we passe through
the fire, and be in the hard service for a while,
ich we shall receive to such joyes at last,
as fire dispels the rack
of any mortall
man.

FIN IS.

THE SEVENTH SERMON of the Lords Supper.

PSAL. 119. VERSE 1. &c.

1 *Blessed are those that are upright in their way, and walke in the law of the Lord.*

2 *Blessed are they that keepe his testimonies, and seeke him with their whole heart.*

3 *Surely they worke none iniquity, but walke in his waies.*

4 *Thou hast commanded to keepe thy precepts diligently.*

THe principall purpose of this whole Psalme is to celebrate and set forth the praises of Gods holy Word, for the admirable excellency of it, the observations and keeping whereof, hee commendeth in this first part, and in these present verses by the { 1 *Manner* of it. 2 The *Motives*, whereby we are invited unto it.

For the *Manner*, it is needfull that first there be internall truth and uprightnesse, devoid (as farre as is possible) of hypocrisie, together with an intire and serious contention of the minde, without negligence and remissenesse: secondly, that there be externall obedience yeelded unto it, by the exercise of all good duties, making our life a journey, and Gods law or doctrine, the way wherein we constantly travaile, without wandring either on the right hand, or on the left, by lust, carnall reason, or any pretences whatsoever, dissonant or swarving from the right rule of the same, untill wee come home, and arrive at the desired place of our rest and felicity. Which hee

also reporteth in the second verse, although in other termes, as of *keeping*, viz. in minde, conscience and practice, *his testimonies*, his blessed word whereby his will is published, and witnesse is borne of his heavenly pleasure.

The *Motives*, or arguments perswading to this sound and sincere obedience, are partly from the comfortable effects which it produceth, and partly from the force of the cause which may and ought to provoke men unto it.

One effect is generall, in that it maketh a man truly happy, hee is blessed thereby with all desirable welfare, whatsoever may doe him good in this life, in every respect, and with assurance of eternall glory and immortality, with full and perfect blisse, in that world which is to come. This one word *Blessed*, comprehendeth in it more precious and delectable treasures, than all the tongues or bookes in the world can severally specifie.

The other effect is more speciall, namely immunity, freedome from the bondage and thraldome of sinne, they are not workers of iniquity, although they often fall into it. Notwithstanding they are compassed about with many infirmities, and doe divers things which God forbiddeth, yet are they not artificers of evill, nor slaves to Satan or corruptions; as for their frailties the Lord passeth by them, *he seeth none iniquity in Jacob, nor transgression in Israel*, Numb. 23. 21.

This is illustrated by the contrary, the vertue and power that is in them for wel-doing: so farre are they from that miserable bondage to live in the seruice of sinne, as that they are made able to performe good services to God, and the same they doe, and constantly proceede therein, choosing *his waies* which he prescribeth, for their wayes to walke in.

The cause which should compell and urge every one to be obedient, is that high and soveraigne authority of the Lord himselfe, exacting it as a duty of loyalty, and laying his commandement upon all men, that they accurately obserue that which he giveth them in charge, not dispensing with themselves, and taking liberty to be directed by their own likings.

Ver. 1. *Bleſſed are thoſe that are upright in their way, &c.*

IN that when the Prophet would make known unto all the world, who are in the happieſt eſtate, & in the higheſt place of account with God, he deſcribeth and ſetteth them forth by this property: that they are ſincere in heart, & upright in life & converſation; in a word, ſuch as truely feare the Lord. The point hence to be noted in generall, is this, that Grace & Religion is the way to all bleſſednes. Religion is the way to happineſſe. *Doct.* 1.

This doctrine the *Pſalmiſt* confirmeth unto us in ſundry other places, as *Pſ.* 1. & 112. *&c.* In the former whereof he declareth, who is a man truely religious, to wit, he that eſchueth ill counſels, and unfull practiſes; and on the other ſide, imbraceth and delighteth in goodnes and godlines, and in the means of obtaining and increaſing the ſame: and then hee pronounceth ſuch a man bleſſed: *Bleſſed* (ſaith he) *is the man that doth not walke in the counſell of the wicked, nor ſtand in the way of ſinners, &c. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law will he meditate day and night.* And to the ſame effects, is that in the other *Pſalme* before named; *Bleſſed is the man that feareth the Lord, and delighteth greatly in his commandements, &c.* Throughout which *Pſalme*, we may obſerve as the true & certain notes of a righteous man, ſo alſo his priviledges, which are very many, and very great, both in regard of himſelfe, and of his poſterity, which ſhall ſpeed the better for his ſake. Notable likewiſe in that place of *Deuter.* where the Lord ſpeaketh unto his Church in this manner: *Bleſſed art thou O Iſrael; who is like unto thee, O people, ſaved by the Lord, the ſhield of thy help, & the ſword of thy glory?* which ſpeech is not to be underſtood, as pertaining only to that nation, but as belonging to all that are the true *Iſrael* of God, & that ſerve him with an upright & faithful hart. Now what ſaith he of the? *Who is like unto thee, O Iſrael?* Why? if they ſhould have looked to outward things, they might have anſwered, the *Egyptians*, the *Ammonites*, *Aſſyrians*, nay the very *Canaanites* themſelves are like unto us, yea far beyond us: for at that time when this was ſpo-

Pſal. 1. &c. and 112. 1.

Deut. 33. 29.

ken, they were in the wildernesse, travelling towards the promised land, & what great matters had they then? *Moses*, who was the best of them, had not a house to rest his head in: none of them could say, This is my ground, there is my corne, thus large are my revenews by the yeare, &c. but they were all tenants at will, at a dayes, or at an houres warning, or lesse, even as Gods pleasure was: yet the Lord maketh a challenge against all the world; *Who is like unto thee, O my people, saved by the Lord?* meaning indeed, that no nation under heaven was comparable unto them, in regard of the wonderfull things that God had wrought for them, and in regard of those heavenly prerogatives which he had vouchsafed unto them, the meanest hewer of wood, or drawer of water, amongst them was preferred before the mightiest Monarch in the world; and that may be said of all true Christians, which was spoken of them; *Who is like unto thee, O people, saved by the Lord?*

The truth of this will more evidently appeare, if wee will weigh the things that follow: Namely,

1 What misery Grace doth free us from.

2 What good things it maketh us to enjoy,
- 1 In this life,
  - 1 Estimation.
  - 2 Safety.
  - 3 Comfort.
- 2 In the life to come, all manner of happinesse.

1 What misery Grace freeth us from.

1 First therefore, that we may see what misery it frees us from, wee must consider, that men naturally are the children of wrath, under the curse and malediction of God, subject to horrible vexations and terrours: all their life long, they live in feare of death, and of such judgements as are forerunners of death: their table is a snare, and their prosperitie their ruine: their adversity is imbittered, and their callings accursed; and in a word, nothing maketh them better, but every thing a great deale worse; all being infected and poysoned unto them by their own sinnes, and Gods fearefull vengeance upon the same. If they live, it is to the increase of their damnation: if they die, they goe to take present possession of destruction: if they refuse to eate and drinke, they are murderers of themselves: if they doe eate and drinke, they are usur-

Note.

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pers of that which is none of their owne. If they come not to the Word and Sacrament, they are contemners of Gods ordinances: if they do come, they are profaners of the same, and so shall be further hardened, to their finall perdition: and is not this a wretched case? Though for their apparell, they were clothed as *Solomon* in the midst of his royalty: though their robes were as rich as was *Aarons* Ephod, or Breast-plate, or the most costliest parts of his garments, all were of no worth without grace: though they fed on the daintiest dishes, and did eate Angels food (as the Israelites are said to do) yet if they be sinfull and rebellious, they shall perish as *Corah, Dathan, & Abiram*, and many other of them did. Though their habitations were as sumptuous and delightfull as *Paradise* was, yet they could have no more comfort therein, then *Adam* had, who when he had once broken the Commandement of God, in eating of the forbidden fruit, notwithstanding all things remained in their excellency as before, yet he was surprised with the terrours and feares of a guilty conscience, and could take no pleasure in the goodly Rivers, in the pleasant fruits, in the variety of all the creatures that were in the garden of *Eden*, &c. But he was faine to flie from Gods presence, and to hide himselfe among the trees of the garden.

And last of all, though their dignity were never so great: their possessions never so ample and large, and their substance never so plentifull and abundant, yet they could have no more comfort in any, or all of these things, than *Belshazzar* that impious king had, who for all his valiant Captains and Souldiers, for all his great cheere and plenty of wine, for all his jollity and triumphing over Gods people, for all his merrie companions that he had about him, and all the meanes that he had to comfort him; yet was he in such horrour, when he saw on the wall the hand-writing against him, *That his countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, and the joynts of his loynes were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.* Dan. 5. 6.

This (and much more lamentable than can possibly be expressed) is the case of all unregenerate men: and how great then must the excellency of Grace needs be, which freeth

man from this wofull estate and condition? Yet this is not all, but as it freeth men from this misery, so

2. Secondly, it bringeth men to the enjoyment of all good things: and that first, in this life, it procureth them the benefits following, namely,

What good things Grace maketh us to enjoy.

1. First, a good estimation: so that it may be well said, that *the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour*: and that of all other, they are the most glorious people, that have the Spirit of Grace and of Glory dwelling in their hearts. For they are precious in Gods sight, as being his chiefe treasure: precious in the eyes of his people, precious in the account of the Angels: yea reverent in the sight of the very wicked, who esteeme them to be honest men, and dare trust them before any other; many times, with their goods, with their children, and their portions, yea and with their soules also. For when they are in any extremitie, lying upon their death-beds, or the like, Oh then they cry out, Send for such a Preacher; send for this or that good man or woman: now their prayers and their speeches might do me good, which heretofore I have rejected, or lightly esteemed: and then none is to bee compared to them, none to be sought unto in respect of them. And when they labour to disgrace and vilifie them, by tearming them dissemblers, and hypocrites, even then against their wills; they highly commend them; for it is in effect, as if they should say: these men pretend they have many vertues in them, but I would not have men thinke, that they are so good and godly as they seeme to bee: If they bee, then they must needs be an excellent people indeed: (For there is none that hath any civilitie in him, but he will acknowledge that it is a good thing to heare, and reade, and conferre, and to spend much time in prayer, as Gods servants do; but they cry out, that they do not these things well, nor with a good heart.) Now if Christians consciences do beare them witnesse, that they do performe these duties in uprightnesse, then they have the testimonie of ungodly men themselves on their sides: and till they can disprove the soundnesse of their hearts, they must, whether they will or not, justifie their behaviour. Thus wee see how godlinesse winneth a

1 A good estimation. Pro. 12. 26.

Note.

good

good estimation.

Now secondly, it doth also bring safety with it: it setteth men out of gunshot, so that neither the devil, nor all the powers of hell, can annoy or hurt them: nor any, or all of the devils instruments in the world, prevaile against them, for their overthrow: for the Lord is evermore a shield and buckler unto them, so that they must first strike through him, before they can come at them. *He will cover them under his wings, and they shall be safe under his feathers*, Psal. 91. 4. 2 Safety.

Thirdly, the vertue and power of grace is such, that it maketh Gods children to rejoyce, even in affliction; as was verified in *David*, who when he had many malicious adversaries against him, and many troubles beset him round about, yet he had more joy of heart than they had, *when their wheat, and their wine did abound*. And so it is with all Gods servants: as their sufferings are many, so are they refreshed with manifold consolations. 3 Consolation. Rom. 5. 3. Psal. 4. 2. Cor. 1.

And when outward matters of rejoycing are furthest removed from them, then are they driven nearer unto God, the fountaine of all true comfort, and by that meanes their hearts are exceedingly revived. And if they be so much cheared in the times of their greatest adversitie, how much more joyfull are they in the dayes of their prosperitie, *when he maketh them to rest in greene pastures, and leadeth them by the still waters: preparing for them a table, in the sight of their adversaries, anointing their heads with oyle, and causing their cups to runne over*, as the *Psalmist* speaketh: And they withall have a principal care to entertaine Gods blessings with thankfulnesse, and to serve him with a good and thankfull heart, in the use and enjoyment thereof. Psal. 23.

Now if their estate be so blessed in this life, what shall their happinesse be when they depart out of this life, to have the fruition of those joyes, which are prepared for the Saints in the kingdome of glory? where all teares shall be wiped away from their eyes, and they being altogether freed from sinne and sorrow, shall receive an immortal crowne of blessednesse with the Saints and Angels, in Gods owne presence, *where is fulnesse of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures* The happines in the life to come.

evermore; where there shall be no parting of company, nor possibility of any unkindnesse, nor tediousnesse in conversing together.

Much more might be spoken of the excellency of this estate, and yet when all hath beene said that can be, it is nothing in comparison of that which the thing is in it selfe, and we shall finde it to be, when we shall lay downe this body of corruption, and be clothed upon with perfect glory. But yet that the dignitie thereof may somewhat more clearly be seene into, let us consider a little further of the

1 Price,
2 Rarenesse, and } thereof.
3 Continuance

The price of Grace.

1 First, concerning the price that was laid downe for the purchasing of it, it was the greatest that ever was given for any thing; for there goeth more to the buying of a Christian, than to the making of the world: for in the creation, GOD did but say the word, and all things were presently formed according to their severall kinds: but in the worke of redemption, God was not onely to say, but to pay also, and that full dearly, even the bloud of his owne Sonne, which was of an infinite value. And therefore if things are to be esteemed according to that which wise men will give for them, surely the estate of Christianity must needs be worthy high estimation, sith the wise God provided it for his children at such an inestimable reckoning.

The rarenesse of it.

Mat. 7. 13, 14. Luk. 12. 32.

2 Further in respect of the rarenesse thereof, it is to be accounted very admirable. If things that are very deare were also very common, that would diminish some part of their worth, but as for this, it is both precious and rare. There are but a very few selected ones, that the Lord hath singled out to be partakers of the life of Grace, and to be afterwards heires of the kingdome of glory, which maketh it to be a gift of farre greater estimation.

3 The continuance of it.

3 Lastly, if it were both deare and rare, yet if it were to be enjoyed but a little, it were the lesse to be regarded: therefore this addition there is unto the happinesse of this estate, that

it

it is also durable, yea everlasting. And whereas all worldly excellency, and all earthly promotions are temporary and vanishing, so that a man may be very high this day, and as low ere to morrow, and none can be happy in possessing those things, through the losse whereof he may so quickly become miserable: it is otherwise with them that are in the state of Grace, for that never fayleth: once a Christian, and ever a Christian: as the Lords purpose changeth not, so neither doth our condition change: but if we have begun in Grace, we shall end in glory, that never shall have end. *Psal.* 16. 11. *Dan.* 12. 2.

Vse 1. Is it so, that Religion and true piety, is the ready way to the highest advancement: then hence let us learne to set our hearts chiefly thereupon, and above all the treasures in the world principally to affect that. We count it good husbandrie in the first place, to seeke after those things that will do us most good: if silver be offered, we will preferre it before Brasse; and if Gold be offered, we will take it rather than Silver. Now concerning this heavenly wisedome, it is said: *Receive mine instruction and not silver, and knowledge rather than fine Gold. For wisedome is better than precious stones, and all treasures are not to be compared unto her.* Pro. 8. 10. 11. And this should encourage us rather to use all industrie for the obtaining of this blessed estate, because it is a thing have-able. It were in vaine for a base person to sue to be a King, a Duke, or a Lord: none almost is so fooliſh, as to seeke for such preferments, because they know it would be but lost labour. But there is not the meanest servant, slave, or bondman, but may attaine to this spirituall dignitie, which is farre beyond all the advancement that the Kingdomes of this world can possibly yeeld. Hee that can pray, heare, meditate, conferre, and judge himselfe in secret before he commeth to the Sacrament, and with all good care and conscionable respect, use all Gods ordinances for the obtaining of faith and other graces, which do ever accompanie the same, shall be sure of good and happy successe: for the Lord will be found of those that seeke him with a true heart; therefore let us not so cast our eyes on earthly commodities, as that in the meane time we neglect this pearle

of price, and this ineſtimable jewell, that will ſo exceedingly
2 Cor. 9.19. enrich us. The Apoſtle telleth us, that thoſe that runne in a race for a prize, though it be but a garland that is ſet up, ſo that they can gaine onely ſome ſmall credit of their agilitie and nimbleneſſe in out-running one another, yet they will put off all that might clogge and hinder them in their race, but eſpecially if they ſhould runne for a crowne of gold: neither will they be ſo fooliſh as to ſtoope downe to take up every pin or point that lyeth in the way; and yet they runne but at an uncertainty; when they have done their beſt, another may carry away both the honour and commodity from them, and certaine it is, that but one alone can win the prize: and even he alſo, though he have the applauſe at one time, may go away with the diſgrace at another; or if his credit do continue all his life time, yet death wil take it away at laſt. From all which the Apoſtle would have us to draw this concluſion, that if ſuch kinde of perſons, notwithſtanding all that hath been ſaid, will ſo beſtirre themſelves, & ſeek to acquit themſelues every way like men; then much more ought we to put our ſelves to it, and with all alacrity run the race that is ſet before us, ſith we run not at an uncertainty, but are ſure to obtaine the crowne; one ſhall not prevent nor deprive another, but all ſhall undoubtedly get that which they do expect; & eſpecially ſeeing that withall we ſtrive for an incorruptible crowne, and ſhall attaine unto not a fading and vaniſhing, but an abiding and everlaſting dignitie.

Objection. O but (will ſome ſay) we beſtow our paines and endevors ſo much about ſpirituall things, in the meane time, we ſhall neglect thoſe earthly things that are needfull, and ſo bring our ſelves to poverty. *Anſwer.* Nay, not ſo, proviſion for our everlaſting eſtate, doth never impaire our preſent eſtate: for *godlines hath the promiſes of this life, and of that which is to come:* and there-
1 Tim. 4.8. by ſhall all matters be bleſſed unto us.

Note. Have we inheritance, wealth, reputation, dignity, &c. This wil aſſure us that we have a good title unto all, and ſeaſon and ſweeten all, that every one of them ſhall be comfortable and profitable unto us, making it cleare unto our hearts and conſciences, that the Lord ſendeth them in mercy, as pledges of

greater

greater matters that he meaneth to bestow upon us.

Have we not these outward things? Godlinesse will make a supply in stead of all: for that *is great gaine with contentment*, in comparison of which, all the promises of contenredneſse that other things make unto us, will be found to be but meere illusions; because it certifieth our soules that God will provide sufficiently for us, which perswasion alone is able to stay the restlesse and unsetled mindes of the sonnes of men, from pursuing after the unprofitable, deceitfull, and lying vanities of this present evill whrld. 1 Tim. 6. 6.

Seeing religion is such an incomparable treasure, it should instruct us in the second place, to have the meanes in due estimation whereby we may be made truely religious, by which our mindes that are blinde, may be enlightened, our hearts of crooked may be made straight, of proud may be made humble, and of fraudulent may be made true and faithfull. And those meanes are the Word, the Sacrament, Prayer, and the like, which are the steps whereby we must ascend unto this honourable estate: for it is as possible for men to make staires to climbe up unto the skie, as for us without these, to ascend unto heaven, by any devices of our owne framing. *Vse 2.*

The Word is the key that must open hell gates, to set us at liberty from the bonds of sinne, of Sathan, and of death, and to unlock heaven gates, that we may have entrance into glory: in which respect it is, that Christ saith unto *Peter*, that he wold give unto him (and consequently to all Ministers of the Gospell) *the keys of the kingdome of heaven*, that is, the dispensation of the word, which maketh the way into heaven lye open to all such as by faith receive the same into their hearts. So that we shold not come unto the means with a base cõceit, or light estimation thereof, but with a large and ample desire & expectation of taking benefit thereby. If men can once espie a way how they may rise in the world, either in great wealth or promotion, they will be most industrious & laborious in that course; they will refuse no paines in seede time, though the weather be unseasonable and cold, and their worke every way troublesome: but they will put themselves to it with all care and industrie, in hope (though it be but an uncertaine hope) of

bettering.

bettering their estate. So those that live by Faires and Markets will not faile one of them ordinarily, neither heat nor cold, winde nor raine, nor any the like impediments shall hinder them from pursuing their commodity: and why then should we be negligent, and play the sluggards while our seeds-time lasteth, and the Lord biddeth us *plow up the fallow ground* of our hearts, that he may sow therein the seed of life, which will never faile to yeeld us a plentifull Harvest, if we can wait upon him for the same? And why should we be slacke and carelesse when our chiefe Market-dayes & Faire-dayes come, and not rather set our hearts and endeavours to seeke after those things, which all that seeke shall finde, and being found will make us men for ever.

Ier. 4.

Vse 3. This should be an encouragement unto us, not to thinke any thing too much, that we can do or suffer, in or for the profession of Christianity.

Objection. Difficulties in Christianity. Oh, but it is an hard matter (may some say) to fast and pray, and mourne, and grieve our hearts continually for our sinnes, and when we have done all, to be derided and maligned, persecuted and slaine for a good cause: and besides all these, to feele Gods hand scourging us, sometimes with povertie, and want, sometimes with feares and terrours, sometimes with temptations and inward conflicts, &c.

Answer. These things seeme very great, and very tedious indeed, to flesh and blood: but in truth they are small, yea matters of nothing, if we consider what is the use of them, and what will be the end of them: and therfore let us remember for our comfort, when we are in this strait and difficult & unpleasant way, that we are going to be installed into a kingdome: and who is there that being offered a *Baronrie*, or a *Lordship*, yea though it be but a Farme, if so be he will take the pains to come for it, who is there (I say) that would take exception, and say, alas, the aire is cloudy, and the weather uncertaine, nay it begins to raine, or haile, or snow already, and therefore I will even stay at home, and never wet my foot for the matter: Nay, if there be but likelihood of some smaller gaine, and the weather foule, and the wayes deepe, and themselves somewhat out of temper also, yet they will adventure to go through all, and

Note.

rather

rather ferry over, than come ſhort of that profit that is offered, how much the more then ought we to breake through al impediments, & ſwallow up all difficulties with the conſideration of this, that our journey tẽdeth not to the getting of ſome ſmal commoditie, or to the purchaſing of ſome worldly poſſeſſions, or to the obtaining of any earthly preheminence or preferment whatſoever; but that we are travelling towards our owne Country, where we ſhall receive an invaluable, & eternall crowne of glory? and albeit we muſt paſſe through many rough, and craggy, & thorny waies, and meet with ſundry things that will be very irkeſome and unpleaſant; yet let us make account withal, that we ſhal find many ſweet comforts, and joyes unſpeakeable and glorious, in the midſt of our pilgrimage, & in the end ſhall have the fruition of that happines, which will make amends for all. And this was it that made the Apoſtle *Paul* ſo comfortable in the midſt of all his ſufferings: 2 Cor. 4. 16. 17
Therfore we faint not (ſaith he) *but though our outward man periſh, yet our inward man is renued daily. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, cauſeth unto us a far more excellent & an eternall weight of glory.* Where we may note, that when he ſpeaketh of the happineſſe of another life, hee magnifieth the ſame exceedingly, both for the worth of it, and for the continuance of it: calling it a far *moſt excellent*, and *eternal weight of glory*. To be excellent *is much*, to be *moſt excellent*, is far more: to be *far moſt excellent*, is yet an higher degree: but when hee calleth it a *far moſt excellent*, and withall *an eternall weight of glory*, it maketh a great addition unto all the former, & ſheweth that it is indeed an inconceiveable & inutterable happineſſe that in the heaven wee ſhall injoy: but on the other ſide, he counteth his affliction light & momentany, becauſe it paſſeth as it were in a thought, & is a thing of nothing, being laid in the ballance againſt the never-fading bliſſe that wee ſhall ſhortly come unto. And as for that weight that is in the tribulations of this life, it is but as an heavy bag of gold, that will make the hart of the owner lighter, in the very carriage of it, & ſo much the more light, by how much weighty it is. And therfore by all theſe motives, we ſhould perſwade, yea even compell our ſoules unto patience under the croſſe of Chriſt,

and

and to perseverance in the practise of all the duties of godlinesse: a patterne of which patience we have in the Hebrews, Heb. 10.33.34. *Who after they had received the light, indured a great fight in afflictions. Partly* (saith the Apostle) *while ye were made a gazing stocke, both by reproaches & afflictions: and partly while ye became companions unto them, which were so tossed to & fro. For both ye sorrowed with me, for my bonds, and suffered with joy the spoyling of your goods: and why? knowing in your selves that you have in heaven a better and more enduring substance.* If their riches had been of such value, as they made shew of, and as the world takes them for, they could not have been so quickly taken from them: but sith they had *betaken them to their wings*, these faithfull ones knew, that heaven, which was reserved for them in stead thereof, was farre more excellent, and more durable; and therefore full glad were they, that for the cause of God, they had made so happy and so blessed an exchange.

Ver. 1. *Blessed are those that are upright in the way, &c.*

And v. 2, *Blessed are those that seek him with their whole heart.*

Doct. 2. These words having been expounded before, offer unto us this Doctrine; That whosoever would have sound happinesse, must have a sound heart.

So much sincerity as there is, so much blessednesse there will be; and according to the degree of our hypocrisie, will be the measure of our misery. It is not in the action done, or in the word spoken, that blessednesse consists, but in the quality of them; that all be done and spoken soundly and sincerely, this is required *Psalme* 15. that hee that will be a member of the Church militant on earth, and of the Church triumphant in heaven, must *walk uprightly, & speake the truth from his heart.* And againe in another Psalme, a question is made to the same effect, *Who shall dwel in the mount ain of the Lord; and who shall stand in his holy place?* and the answer is, *He that hath innocent* Psal. 24.3.4. *hands, & a pure heart, which hath not lift up his mind to vanity, nor sworne deceitfully.* In which words we have a description of a sound hearted man:

1 By his actions, that he dealeth uprightly, and so hath innocent hands.

2 By his affection, that he lifteth not *up his minde to vanity*,

that

that is, setteth not his heart on any earthly thing: In which sense that phrase is used in the originall, *Ier.* 22.27.

3 By his speeches, that hee hath not sworne, nor any way spoken *deceitfully*.

The reasons to confirme this point, are drawne from the great inconveniences that will follow on the contrary; for if there be in any a fraudulent and deceitfull heart:

Reasons.

1 First, there is a deadly quarrell, and mortall enmity between God and him: for who are they that are reconciled to God, whose sins are covered by the righteousnesse of his Sonne, so that they shall not be imputed unto them? even they *in whose spirit there is no guile*. And what will follow then for those whose hearts are full of fraud and deceit, but that they must needs be destitute of all hope of the pardon of their sins, and so consequently lye open to the strokes of Gods vengeance due unto the same?

1 God hath a quarrell against hypocrites. Psal. 32. 2.

2 And as their persons are hatefull to the Lord, so are their services abhorred of him: for indeed they are not the services of God, but of Sathan, and of their own flesh: and therefore be they never so glorious in outward shew, and let them pretend never so much zeale in the performance of them, yet the Lord hath them in utter detestation. As we may plainely see in the Hypocriticall Pharisies, they would be every where praying with great devotiō, & very often fasting with great austerity, & blowing a trumpet to give notice unto men of their almes-deeds and liberality, and striving with all their might by exterrnall observations to win themselves the praise of holy & zealous men: yet for all this, our Saviour sharpely rebuketh them, saying: *Ye are they which justifie your selves before men, but God knoweth your hearts, for that which is highly esteemed before men, is an abhomination in the sight of God.* It is as loathsome unto him, as Carions, or Toades, as any such creatures as mans nature doth most abhor, can be unto us.

2 He loathes their services. Matth. 6. Luke 16. 15.

3 Thirdly, this is another misery of hypocrites, that they live in continuall feare and danger: there are holes in their maskes, (at least there will be and their double dealing shall be seene into: it shall some time or other come to light, how they have abused Gods presence, and dissembled with their brethren, & making

3 They live in continuall danger.

making faire shewes, and pretences of that which they never meant: their sins shall not alwaies lye hid, but either they will
Luke 8. 13. give over all, in time of persecution, *as the stony ground did*, or in hope of promotion, as *Iudas* and *Achitophel* did, and so discover their false-heartednesse: or else it shal be drawn forth by their speeches, in their merriments, or in their distempers, or els Gods Spirit in Godly men shall descrie it, by working in them hearts a vehement suspition of them and causing them with a judicious eye, more narrowly to pry into their workes and wayes. By one such meanes or other, God will lay them open to the view of the world: so that being in such perill, they cannot but have a fearefull heart, & a restlesse conscience. And to this purpose, notable is that saying of *Saloman*; *Hee that*
Prov. 10. 9. *walketh uprightly, walketh boldly or surely, but he that perverteth his wayes shall be known*. Whence it is apparant, that the upright man needeth not to feare any thing: needeth not to be afrvid of ill men, for though they may disgrace him, they cannot shame him: he needeth not to be afraid of good men, for the oftner he speaketh to them, and converseth with them, the more he is approved by them; neither needeth he to be afraid of God, for he that *searcheth the heart & the reins*, knoweth & alloweth of the integrity of his soule. He hath no cause of feare for the present, because all things goe well with him; neither is there any for afterwards, because all things shall goe well with him, for he shall never goe away from God: None can plucke him out of his hand. Sathan cannot, because he *that*
John 10. 29. *is in us, is stronger than he that is in the world*, sinne cannot, be-
John 4. 4. cause grace will prevaile against it: the world cannot, because this *is our victory, whereby wee overcome the world, even our*
1 Ioh. 5. 4. *faith*. And the Apostle concludeth generally for all other mat-
Rom. 8. 38 39. ters, that *neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*.

What followeth now on the contrary part for hypocrites; *but he that perverteth his way*, that is, aloweth himself in any ill course though never so secretly, *shall be known?* that is, his vile & wretched dissembling shal be detected, if not in this world,

yet

yet when the thoughts of all hearts ſhall be made manifeſt: they ſhall be found out firſt or laſt, and therefore they cannot but walke fearefully in their ill courſes, wherein they go forward and give liberty unto themſelves.

This ſhould make us exceeding carefull and warie, when we offer our ſelves to Gods ſervice, to ſearch and digge deep into our hearts, that we may caſt out all the looſe earth that is there, and ſo our building may be on a rocke, and not on the ſand. We muſt purge away that leaven of hypocriſie, that hath wholy infected our nature, that ſo we be not found to halt in our worſhipping of God, leſt he take us with the manner, as he did him that *came without a wedding garment*, whom he ſingled out from all the gueſts that were preſent, and that not onely to ignominie and reproach, but to everlaſting puniſhment and torment in hell fire. It is very dangerous then we ſee to deale hypocritically with God; it is not ſafe with men to pretend and ſay one thing before their faces, and to ſpeake and doe another behind their backs, becauſe they may peradventure diſcerne it: but it is more dangerous to diſſemble with God, for he doth certainly diſcerne it, and will as certainly puniſh it. *Vſe 1.* Matth. 22.

Many when they are reproved, or admoniſhed, will ſnuffe at it, and ſay: What need you be ſo hot in the matter? I hope you cannot charge me to be either Whore or Theefe. But though man cannot charge you (which all cannot ſay) is that a ſufficient diſcharge for you? Nay you muſt looke unto it, that God finde not matter ſufficient to convict you, either of thoſe particulars, or of worſe and viler offences.

And let none reply that it is ſufficient, that wee frequent Sermons, and partake of the Sacrament, and come to prayer in publike, and uſe prayer in the family, and perform other duties that Chriſtian men and women ſhould doe, and no more is required at our hands.

Yes, God doth require more than this, he called for the heart in all theſe: though a man be preſent at never ſo many Sermons, yet if his minde run after his pleaſures, or after his covetouſneſſe, ſo that when his body travels one way, his affections travell another way; all his hearing is nothing worth. *Anſwer.* Prov. 23.

And so in prayer, though there bee never so many excellent words, apt tearmes, and godly sentences, yet if they come from the head, and not from the heart, from wit and memory, and not from the inward feeling of the soule, they cannot be accepted. God professeth indeed that he will be *found of those that seeke him:* but then they must *seeke him with their whole heart:* that is, truly and fervently: they must not come with a part of their hart, for then they bring no part, in Gods account; but with all their heart, for hee that giveth him not all, giveth him nothing at all. So for the workes of our calling, if we doe not labour therein as Gods servants, wee can expect no wages, we may have commendation from men, but wee shall have a checke and rebuke from the Lord; mens tongues may magnifie us, but Gods hand will confound us.

Ier. 29.

Therefore let us, when we enter upon any good way, endevour with an upright & true heart to go forward in the same, otherwise it had beene better never to have entred hereinto. Now that we may make sure worke in this regard, let us try our sincerity by the good effects that doe ever accompany the same.

Markes of an upright heart, 1 Universall obedience. Psal. 109. 8.

1 One note therefore of a sound heart (which wee should take for our triall) is to be universall in our desires, and in our practise, that *we have respect to every commandement of God*, to the first Table as well as to the second, and to the second as well as to the first: that we be righteous towards men, as well as religious towards God; that wee looke to our hearts as well as to our actions, and to our actions as well as to our hearts. Contrary to this rule is the dealing of those, that will give dispensations unto themselves for many things, so that they can make a shew of some things. What if wee bee not so strict for the Sabbath? (thinke they) yet we are no swearers nor blasphemers: what if we take a little liberty for vaine sports and idle discourses? these are but trifles; we will not be adulterers, nor filthy speakers, &c. This is a shrewd signe of a heart full fraught with guile and deceit: the property of a good conscience to be *willing and desirous in all things to walk honestly*. If one be never so strict for the Sabbath, if hee will helpe himselfe by a lye now & then, for his commodity, or for his

Heb. 13. 18.

his credit ſake; and if a man bee never ſo rigorous and ſevere for matters of juſtice, and yet will ſteale time from the Lord upon this day, and ſpend the ſame in his owne buſineſſes, and affaires, whether ſecretly or openly: & ſo for any other thing, if wee make bold to borrow a little law of God; this is an argument of a falſe and diſſembling heart; and therefore this muſt be taken heed of, as being very dangerous.

A ſecond marke is to have a continuall increaſe in godlines, neither to wax worſe, nor to ſtand at a ſtay, but ſtill to ſtrive to grow better and better, as the Apoſtle *Paul* teſtifieth that he himſelfe did: *I forget that which is behind, & endeavour my ſelfe to that which is before: & follow hard toward the marke, to the price of the high calling of God in Chriſt Ieſus.* And having ſhewed what he did himſelfe, he annexeth an exhortation alſo for us; *Let us therfore, as many as are perfect* (that is ſincere, and void of groſſe hypocriſie) be thus minded. Hee was not as a vaine fooliſh man, who running in a race will be ever & anon looking back how much ground he hath rid: but his eye was upon the marke, conſidering how much he had yet to runne, how farre off hee was from perfection: and the ſame minde ſhould be in us, & will be in as many of us, as are indued with the ſame ſpirit that *Paul* was. We muſt every day labour to abound more & more in all *Wiſdome, and in al goodneſſe.* If we prayed once a day in private, and that ſomewhat coldly at the firſt, we muſt afterward pray twice or thrice, or oftner in a day as occaſion is offered, and that more fervently, and feelingly, than we did in the beginning. If we did reade and meditate more ſeldome: and with greater weakeneſſe & diſtraction at our firſt entrance into profeſſion, in our proceeding we muſt uſe thoſe exerciſes more frequently, and performe them more ſeriouſly and cheerefully: and the like may be ſaid for all other duties. Thus if we can labour to doe, and when we ſlip, and ſo are ſtayed now and then in our race, yet if we recover our ſelves with ſpeed, and ſet ſurer, and looke better to our ſteps, and make more haſte in our way than we did before, wee muſt not be diſcouraged, though we finde not ſo good progreſſe as were to be wiſhed for: God will accept of our endevour, and his ſpirit will beare us witneſſe that we have a true heart,

2 Growth in Grace. Phil. 3. 13. 14

Verſe 15.

Rom. 15. 14.

Note.

Note.

heart, notwithstanding we come farre short of that we should and other of Gods Saints do attaine unto. But on the contrary, if we stand at a stay, or start aside like a broken bow, and so turne backe againe unto folly, it is much to be suspected, that we had never any soundnesse in us.

3 A constant & conscionable use of all the meanes.

3 A third token of sincerity is, constantly and carefully to use all the good meanes of attaining to goodnesse, and to eschew all the inducements that may allure unto evill. Doth any one hate swearing? then let him shew it by avoiding the company of blasphemers. Doth any one loath impurity and filthinesse? then let him testifie it by separating himselfe from all wanton and lascivious company, and from all suspected persons and places. If one pretend that he hateth these and the like evils, and yet will adventure upon the bait, it is sure that such a one wanteth that truth of heart, which should bee in him, and is in all, so farre as they are sound within.

Note.

So for the contrary, doth any one desire that grace and religion may flourish in his heart, and that the fruits thereof may appeare in his life? then let him use all private and publicke religious exercises, whereby these things may be wrought and increased in him; and delight in such company, as both by precept and example may further him therein. Doth any one wish that he could get victory over some speciall sinnes and corruptions that he is troubled withall? then let him enter into combat against them, as the Apostle did, *Rom.* 7. Let him humble himselfe by fasting and prayer, and complain and cry unto the Lord for the repressing of them, and get such forcible reasons against them out of the Scriptures, as may quell the strength & violence of them; and thus a sincere heart will do.

Note.

But if we make shew that we desire to be godly & religious, and yet use not the means at all, or but some of them: or if we use them all, it is but by fits and starts: or if we use them constantly, yet we do it but remisly and coldly, we cannot have any assurance that our hearts are faithfull unto the Lord.

4 Respecting God in all things.

4 A fourth argument of sincerity is, to performe all duties as in Gods presence, looking unto him, as the directer and discerner of our thoughts, words, and works, and thinking it sufficient if he approve of us, though men do dislike us; as the

Apostle

Apoſtle *Paul* telleth the *Corinthians*, *As touching me, I paſſe very little to be judged of you, or of mans judgement*, &c. *He that judgeth me is the Lord.* And againe in the Epiſtle to the *Theſſ.* *As we were allowed of God that the Goſpell ſhould be committed unto us, ſo we ſpeake: not as they that pleaſe men, but God, which approveth our hearts.* And therefore he prayeth in another place, *that the Corinthians might do no ill*, not *that he might ſeeme approved*, and have the credit of their goodneſſe, as being wrought chiefly by his miniſtery: but *that they might do that which is honeſt, though he were diſallowed*, to wit, by men: for with God the righteous judge, he knew that he ſhould bee both approved and regarded. Thus he that is a ſervant, faithful and truſty in his place, ſerving the Lord Chriſt in conſcience, and not men with eye-ſervice, albeit he ſhould be accounted the moſt idle and untruſty ſervant in all the family (being indeed the moſt diligent and painefull of all) he will ſtill go on with his faithfulneſſe, and not diminiſh any jot of his induſtry and laborioufneſſe. 1 Cor. 4. 3, 4. 1 Theſ. 2. 4. 2 Cor. 13. 7.

This *Job* alledgeth as a teſtimony of his integrity, that whereas he might have given free ſcope to his eye for wanton looks, and to his heart for ſinfull affections, yet he ſaith of himſelfe: *I made a covenant with mine* [illegible] *an a maid?* And why was he thus ſo carefull to guide his eye, and to governe his heart in a right manner? the reaſon is rendred, ver. 4. *Doth not he behold my wayes, and tell all my ſteps?* This alſo is *Joſephs* commendation, that whereas he might have lived in impurity and filthineſſe, not onely without blame and reproach, but even with the favour of his ſinfull and unchaſte miſtriſſe, yet the feare of the Lord reſtrained him from that monſtrous and abhominable ſinne: *How can I do this great wickednes* (ſaith he) *and ſo ſinne againſt God? Yea though ſhe ſpake to him from day to day, yet he refuſed, and would not ſo much as be in her company*, leſt any temptation ſhould be offered unto him by that occaſion: he would rather have her diſpleaſure than Gods, and rather be impriſoned amongſt malefactours for forbearing of evill, than to be vexed and tortured on the racke of an evill conſcience for committing of evill. And this good diſpoſition Gods ſer- Iob 31. 1. Gen. 39. 10. Note.

vants

vants do many times find in themselves; that when they have falne into any secret sinne, and have entertained vaine and foolish thoughts, or corrupt and carnall affections, when they have over-shot themselves in their speeches, or in their carriage, and no man discerneth it, yet they take themselves with the manner; and knowing that Gods holy eyes are upon them, they judge and condemne themselves, and are throughly angry with themselves for that which they have done.

Yea sometimes, when men praise and extoll them, yet they blush within themselves, and have an holy indignation against their own soules, that they have dealt hypocritically, or vainegloriously, or lightly, or indiscreetly, or passionately. This is a very singular marke, and undoubted argument of great piety and sincerity. As on the contrary, it is a certaine note of grosse hypocrisie, ever to be caring what men thinke, and speake of us, and of our doings, and never to regard what God seeth amisse in the same.

5 To receiue a rebuke willingly and profitably.

The last note (though many other might be named) shal be this, patiently to endure an admonition and reproofe, & to be desirous of the same: to the intent we may profit thereby: in publike, to the best and desire most those Sermons, wherin our owne corruptions are most throughly met withall, and struck at with greatest sharpnes, & vehemency: and in private, to be most glad of the society of those friends, that will in wisdome and mercy, tell us most often, and most plainly of our faults.

Note.

Hypocrites cannot abide that any should rubbe upon their galled backs as it were, or come neere them to touch their gouty, festred, & corrupted consciences, but they will wince and kicke, and lay about them, and cry out on those that are such judgers, and such busy-bodies (as they tearme them) and so reject all wholsome reproofes, & carry a bitter heart against the reprovers. Onely those that are sound-hearted, can submit themselves, in the lowlinesse of their minds, and meeknesse of their spirits, to beare admonition when they need it (be he a superiour or an inferiour that administreth the same) and labour to make a right use hereof, & to love the party the better that will deale so mercifully and faithfully with their soules.

Obser.

Indeed Gods best children may sometimes faile herein, and

begin

begin to buſtle and take on, when they are ſomewhat ſharply dealt withall, and cannot ſo readily and cheerfully ſwallow and digeſt thoſe bitter pils, as they ſhould: but if they be grieved in their ſoules, that they find ſo much pride in themſelves, and though they be a little diſtempered in company, yet when they are alone, they are aſhamed of their folly, and deſire more wiſedome and grace to reape benefit by the admonitions that ſhall afterwards be given them, and begin to thinke more reverently of the parties that ſhewed them that mercy & kindneſſe: they ſhould not be diſmaied, knowing that they are true *Iſraelites, in whom there is no guile*, notwithſtanding that unwillingneſſe and untowardneſſe to undergo a rebuke, that they finde in themſelves, and their corrupt nature.

Secondly, this is for the great comfort of all ſuch as finde *Vſe 2.* theſe notes of uprightneſſe in themſelves, though they have many corruptions and imperfections mixed with their beſt workes, yet ſeeing they have pure hearts, they are happy and bleſſed, and ſhall finde the good effects of their bleſſedneſſe. True holineſſe, and true happineſſe are never ſeparated. As for *Note.* perfection, God looks not for it at our hands. If ſinne hang on us, but we would faine caſt it off, if we finde unbeleefe, we would moſt gladly get faith: if we be troubled in our hearts with hardneſſe, but are deſirous of ſoftneſſe: if we be humbled for that we cannot be humbled ſufficiently, nor get ſuch a large heart as we would deſire and expect grace from heaven, let us not be diſcomforted for our defects and frailties: for the Lord will ſpare us, and be gracious unto us *in his beloved Son*: according to that worthy prayer of good King *Hezekiah*, *The good Lord be mercifull toward him that prepareth his whole heart to ſeeke the Lord God of his Fathers, though he be not cleanſed according to the purification of the Sanctuary.* 2 Chro. 30. 18, 19.

Though many have beene brawlers heretofore, let them labour to be peaceable: though they have beene wanton, let them ſtrive to be heavenly: though they have beene filthy, let them endeavour to get chaſtity: though they have been ignorant and prophane, let them ſtudy to obtaine knowledge and holineſſe: and then they may come to the Lords Table, and welcome: the Lord will have reſpect unto them, and grant them

them pardon for their sinnes, and supply all their wants, and give them more grace to do their duty, in the remainder of their life, and in the dayes of their pilgrimage that are yet behinde.

Surely they worke none iniquity. That is, they make not a trade, and common practise thereof. Slip they do, through the infirmitie of the flesh, and subtiltie of Satan, and the allurements of the world: but they do not ordinarily and customably go forward in unlawfull and sinfull courses. In that the *Psalmist* setteth downe this as a part (and not the least part neither) of blessednesse, *That they worke none iniquity which walke in his wayes*, the doctrine to be learned hence is this,

Doct. 3. A prerogative to be freed from sinne.

That it is a marvellous great prerogative to be freed from the bondage of sinne.

So soone as any man is truly religious, he is presently in state of happinesse.

They are *blessed in the way*, and before they come unto the wayes end, whiles they walke, and are not put off till they attaine to their perfect rest, while they seeke God, and not then onely, when they have found the fulnesse of his gracious and glorious presence. That indefinite manner of saying (that *the man is blest which walketh not in the counsell of the wicked, but delighteth in the Law of the Lord*; *and blessed is the man that feareth the Lord*) importeth so much, but especially by that testimony, the truth of the point is evidently evicted, which pronounceth *every one blessed who feareth the Lord, and walketh in his wayes*: forasmuch as many of them are of no long standing in the exercise of piety and religion, and many in the semblance & shew to the world (which conceiveth of things according to deluded sense, and the abuse of reason) are in a miserable case, and wretched condition.

Psal. 1.1.
Psal. 112.1.

Reason 1. For reason hereof consider: first, that the Lord owneth his children as soone as he hath begotten them: they are his people, when they are sanctified and made partakers of his grace, and that is an undeniable verity: Blessed are the people which be so, yea, *Blessed are the people whose God is the Lord*: for himselfe with all his attributes is become theirs.

Psal. 144.15.

2 Secondly, that their sinnes are remitted, and they justified by

by the merits and ſufferings of Chriſt, both from guiltineſſe, and puniſhment, the unſpeakable comfort whereof they beſt apprehend that have beene in *Davids* caſe, preſſed with the heavy weight of a guilty conſcience, and the teſtification of Gods diſpleaſure for the ſame. When a man ſhall be accuſed by the voyce of God; when he ſhall be convicted by the teſtimony of his owne heart; when he ſhall be condemned by the ſentence of juſtice; when he ſhall ſee the certainty and grievouſneſſe and nearneſſe of the execution, being ready bound for it, by the curſes of the Law, now to have a pardon, now to be ſet at liberty, now to be diſcharged of the crime, and freed from the penalty, perill, and reproach, who can pierce to the top, or ſound to the bottome of this heavenly conſolation? Pſal 32.1,2.

Thirdly, that their ſubſtance and poſſeſſions are forthwith upon their ſound and faithfull imbracing of Gods holy Goſpell, after an admirable manner and meaſure enlarged. *All things are yours*, ſaith the Apoſtle to ſuch perſons, *Whether it be Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas*, you have a right in, and benefit by every Miniſter whom you ſhall heare; *or the world*, the earthly commodities ſo farre as they are profitable for you, and will do you good; *or life*, ſo long as God will have your dayes continued, you have a good eſtate in your breath, and the cohabitation of ſoule and body, and enjoy the ſame as a freehold; *or death*, your departure out of this world will be gainfull unto you, and much for your advantage: *Or things preſent, or things to come:* proſperity preſent, or to come, or adverſity and croſſes preſent, or to come, yea eternall bliſſe to come, whatſoever you ſhall heare or ſee, or have the fruition of at the day of the Lord, or in heaven, *all are yours, and you are Chriſts, & Chriſt Gods.* 1 Cor. 3. 22.

Vſe 1.

This point well ſerveth for the confutation of ſome, for the comfort of others, and the inſtruction of all.

In the firſt place, they are confuted who are growne ſo miſerably erronious, that they imagine men ſo ſoone as they ſoundly imbrace religio, forthwith to become miſerable, who make a mocke of the counſell of the poore, becauſe the Lord is his truſt. *Pſal.* 14. 6. Now, ſay they, is his riſing at the higheſt, let him looke for no higher promotions: now is the wealth

wealth at the greatest, you shall shortly see him fall into beggery, now are all his delights past, and come to an end: he will live the rest of his dayes in lumpishnesse, and melancholy: now the love that hath beene borne unto him, will quickly grow cold, his friends will soone leave him, and turne to foes: And why (I pray you) must there needs be such a change? Is the favour of God so hurtfull? are his promises so full of perils? are his graces so pernicious? Who raiseth up, and exalteth men to preferment? doth not the Lord? who bestoweth riches, and disposeth of all the commodities of the world? doth not the Lord? who filleth mens hearts with joy and gladnesse, especially with true joy and spirituall consolation? doth not the Lord? And who carryeth mens hearts in his hand, to make them hate, or love, to maligne, or to be beloved? doth not the Lord? And shall we thinke then, that he which hath all honours in his power, will throw downe his owne children into base ignominy and contempt? And that he which is the Lord and owner of all things, will suffer his best servants to enjoy nothing? And that he which is the God of comfort wil oppresse his people with vexation and sorrow? And that he which by grace worketh love in his owne, and by providence commandeth kindnesse in the hearts of his enemies, will endure no man to beare good affection to his favourites, and dearlings?

In the next place they are confuted, that think they may be happy, but it is uncertaine, whether they shall be so, because according to their opinion, men may have grace, & lose grace, they may be the sonnes of light to day, and the children of darknesse to morrow: For he that is once truly blessed (as every one is which is truly godly) shall perpetually be blessed, and cannot possibly be unblessed againe.

Let no man thinke that time hath worne away, or dryed up the vertue of Gods holy Word, which in the Apostles time was wont to be *an immortall seed*, that now we should have a mortall regeneration by it. Or that Saint *John* spake onely touching the perseverance of those regenerate that lived in those dayes, when he said, *Whosoever is borne of God sinneth not, for his seed remaineth in him, neither can he sinne*, that

1 Pet. 1. 23.

is,

is, fall into the power of ſinne, and returne to the dominion of it, becauſe he is borne of God.

In the third place they are confuted which grant that in time the godly men ſhall attaine to certaine happineſſe, but in another world, and after ſo long a time, as that the worth and value of it is thereby much impaired, as if it were a purchaſe of lands to be poſſeſſed after ſome lives, or many yeares to come. But if this be ſo, why doth the Apoſtles ſpeake of the preſent, and ſome ſay, *We know that we are tranſlated from death to life?* 1 Ioh. 3. 14. And another ſay, *We all beholding as in a mirrour the glory of the Lord with open face, and are changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory, as by the ſpirit of the Lord?* 2 Cor. 3. 18. And why doth Chriſt himſelfe ſay, *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, He that heareth my word, and beleeveth in him that ſent me, hath everlaſting life, and ſhall not come into condemnation, but hath paſſed from death unto life?* Ioh. 5. 24. And why is that ſolemne ſong of praiſe ſung unto Chriſt, by the foure living creatures, and the foure and twenty Elders, ſaying, *Thou haſt redeemed us to God by thy bloud, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and haſt made us to our God Kings and Prieſts, and we ſhall reigne on the earth?* Revel. 5. 10.

Theſe abſurdities being thus refuted, let us make uſe for comfort to ſuch as are upright in their wayes, and walke in the commandements of God, every eſtate and condition which they are brought unto, tendeth to their felicitie and well-fare. Are they in high places & advanced above many others? The Lord in goodnes hath exalted their horne, and raiſed them to that dignitie and honour. Are they in low place, and many others above them? They are Princes walking on the ground, and farre more honourable than ſervants on horſes. Are they rich and wealthy, having ſtore of goods and ſubſtance in their houſes, barnes, fields, ſhops, or ware-houſes? The bleſſing of the Lord hath made them rich, and it is he that repleniſhed them with good things, the light of his countenance ſhineth on their habitations. Eccl. 10. 7.

Are they poore, and ſcanted of that plenty which others abound withall, and ſo driven to fare hard, and hee courſely cladded, and meanly harboured, neither have great portions to leave to theirs? Herein they are not unlike to Chriſt their head,

head, nor to many of his principall members, both Prophets and Apostles, who being poore, yet made many rich, and as having nothing, possessed all things. Are they healthy, strong, and likely long to live? They shall performe the more service to God, and receive the greater reward: they shal be the more usefull to the people of God, whose prayers and thanks to the Lord in their behalfe, will countervaile all their services; they shall reape the fruit of a long life, by seeing of good, and beholding the favours of God upon themselves, and the rest of his servants. Are they sickly, weake, and shortly to depart out of the world? They are faire forwards towards their rest, and almost at the end of all their sinnes and calamities: looke how neare they draw towards their dissolution, so neare they approach to the most comfortable presence of Iesus Christ, and to an eternall cohabitation with him.

3 The instruction which we are to receive hence is, the same which we have taught in the former point, that no paines be neglected which may further us to this felicity, or any difficulties unresisted, which may hinder us from the same. For good markets and commodious trafficke, men rise early, and ride farre, blacke mornings, and deepe wayes seldome keepe them at home, after they have resolved their journeys; gaine turneth rain into faire weather, cold into Sunne-shine, uneven ground into plaine, and myre into gravell: and shall every foots breadth in spirituall travelling be counted a mile long, and every threat or hard word against us, a thunder-clappe, and every small molestation, for well-doing; an high mountaine in our way that we cannot climbe over, or an impassable Fenne, that we cannot wade thorow? I beseech you let not earthly transitory things bee more industriously sought for of worldlings, than durable substance of Christians. An earnest and true desire is mighty in force, to worke diligence and the apprehension of happinesse, is as forcible to kindle that desire. Would *Ioseph* have pleaded that his shifting of apparell might have annoyed him, rather than he would have gone to *Pharaoh* out of the bondage of prison, for honour and promotion? Or did *Iacob* thinke it a tedious voyage to come downe unto him into Egypt? The case is cleare then, and apparant, that no labours bestowed, or troubles sustained

are

are able to counterpoile piety and godlineſſe, and therfore alſo let us beware leſt on the other ſide, profits, and pleaſures, advancements ſteale not away our hearts from it, and diminiſh our joyes and delights in it. They all in compariſon of it, are but as ſtubble, chaffe, dung, and Sathan will be ready to game with us, and ſtake downe theſe trifles, farre baſer than pinnes, or cherry ſtones, that playing with him, wee may loſe our patrimony, our livings, our lives, our ſoules, and ſalvation. For the ſatisfying of our earthly deſires, ſo often as we are carried thereunto, we hazard our comfort, and ſafety, and deprive our ſelves of innumerable bleſſings and benefits.

If there were no other reward but this, yet it were a happy thing to be religious, even in this reſpect, that we ſhal be ſet at liberty from ſuch a ſervice. This point is evident from the Apoſtles words, where he ſpeaketh thus: *God be thanked, that yee have been the ſervants of ſinne, but ye have obeyed from the heart unto the forme of doctrine, whereunto yee were delivered.* Rom. 6. 17. Where we ſee, that this was not the leaſt priviledge that they had by being Gods ſervants, but indeed a matter for which he was greatly to be magnified; that wheras they had beene the ſlaves of ſin, and (as baſe drudges) at the command of every vile and wretched luſt; by the vertue of the Word powerfully preached unto them, and faithfully received of them, they had beene delivered from that bondage, and made the ſervants of God in righteouſneſſe, and holineſſe of life & converſation. And therefore in that ſame Chapter, *verſe* 14. it is promiſed unto Gods Children, as a ſpeciall favour, *That ſinne ſhall not have dominion over thē*. It may ſometimes tyrannouſly uſurpe authority in them; but the ſtrength of grace, and the operation of the holy Spirit of God, will ſtill diminiſh, and at laſt aboliſh the force and violence thereof: ſo that it ſhall never beare ſuch ſway over them, as in the time of ther unregeneracie it did.

Reaſons.

The truth of this doctrine will yet more clearly ſhine forth, if we conſider whar the maſter, the ſervice, & the reward of ſinfull perſons are. As for their maſter, it is Sathan: *For he is the God of this world, & the Prince that ruleth in the children of diſobedience*: of whom all unbeleevers are held in captivity, and

Ephes. 2. 2. Sathan is the maſter of all ſinners.

ſtill

ſtill imployed according to his will and pleaſure. Now he is a more cruell and ſavage tyrant, than ever *Pharaoh* was: though he were very fierce againſt the *Iſraelites*, & exerciſed great tyranny over them, yet Sathan putteth his vaſſails to carry heavier burdens, and do toile out themſelves in baſer work, than ever the taskmaſters of *Egypt* impoſed on the poor *Iſraelites*.

Their ſervices.

Note.

For all impenitent ſinners are in thraldome to every brutiſh luſt: they muſt defile their bodies, and corrupt their ſoules, and conſciences, and pollute all their works and waies, when, and in what manner ſoever the divell will have them; they muſt converſe with euery lewd and ſinfull companion, they muſt runne up and downe like drudges to follow every vaine and baſe delight, to purſue every meane and trifling commoditie, and to hunt after every promotion and dignitie that offers it ſelfe unto their view.

They cannot live peaceably in the day, nor reſt quietly in the night: as we may ſee in gameſters, who breake their ſleepe, miſpend their time & ſtrength, deprive themſelves of a comfortable eſtate, and bring many miſeries upon themſelves and their families, by their over-eager purſuit of their ungodly and unthrifty courſes. It is a woefull and lamentable caſe that frantick perſons are in, that muſt have every one in the family to attend upon, and to have an eye unto them, leſt they ſhould hang themſelves, or drowne themſelves, or get a knife to cut their throats, or ſome way or other worke themſelves miſchiefe: but farre worſe is their caſe, that are poſſeſt with a ſpirituall frenzie, and led by the ſuggeſtions of Sathan, who are evermore labouring to worke out their own overthrow, and to bring upon themſelves deſtruction of body and ſoule, which is the reward that Sathan giveth thē, for all their pains that they have taken in ſerving him, and in fulfilling the luſts of their owne wicked fleſh: according to the ſaying of the Apoſtle, *The wages of ſinne is death*: that is, everlaſting death: which is an utter ſeparation from Gods bleſſed preſence, and from all manner of comforts whatſoever, to indure unſpeakeable and endleſſe torments *in the lake that burneth with fire and brimſtone, which is the ſecond death.*

3 The reward.

Rom. 6.

Reaſon 2. Another reaſon, why it is a great priviledge to be exempted from

from the dominioh of ſinne, is, becauſe it is a teſtimony that we are the ſonnes of God, as it is ſaid by the Apoſtle *Iohn*, *He that committeth ſin is of the Divell, and whoſoever is borne of God, ſinneth not.* And why? becauſe the efficacie of the word and ſpirit doe reſtraine him there-from. Ioh. 3.8.9.

A third reaſon is becauſe that is it whereby we are made conformable unto Chriſt Ieſus; when wee are freed from the ſlavery of ſiune, we are ſtill tranſlated from glory to glory, and have the Image of God renued in us daily more and more, *purging our ſelves even as Chriſt is pure*, 1 Ioh. 3.3.

This ſerveth for our inſtruction, that ſeeing it is ſuch a preheminence not to be a worker of iniquity, therfore we ſhould hereby fence & arme our ſelves againſt all inticements, wherby we might be allured to ſinne, either in heart or in behaviour, when pleaſure ſmileth upon us, or filthy lucre ſetteth on our hearts, or preferment calleth for us, &c. Let this be as a buckler whereby to repell all the fiery darts of the divell; *It is a bleſſed thing to worke none iniquity, & what ſhould it profit a man to win the whole world, and to loſe his owne ſoule?* Moſes *choſe rather to ſuffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin*, & the preferments of *Egypt for a ſeaſon*. *Vſe* 1. Luke 9. 25. Heb. 11. 25. 26.

It was a fooliſh and mad part of the *Iſraelites* to deſire to returne into Egypt, the houſe of their bondage, that they might eate of their fleſh-pots, and of the Leekes and Onions, that in time paſt they had there enjoyed: but much more void of ſenſe and reaſon are they, that when they have been once deliverell from that ſpirituall ſervitude, will caſt themſelves into thraldome againe: and when they have bin puld out of the ſnares of the Divell, wherein they were held at his pleaſure, will returne again to folly, and intangle themſelves the ſecond time. Wherfore let this put ſtrength into us in all conflicts, that we may ſtand reſolutely, as againſt other aſſaults, ſo againſt that of the examples of great and mighty men, who uſually take their liberty in all voluptuous and licentious kinde of living. This conſideration (I ſay) ſhould arme us againſt it. *The Lord hath pronounced them bleſſed that work none iniquity*: & if I be of the number of them, I ſhall be more happy in renouncing ſinne, than the greateſt Potentate on the earth is, or can be, in commit-

committing of sinne. And therefore let us deale as *Eliphas* did in the booke of *Iob*, *I have seen the foolish well rooted*, (saith he) *and suddenly I cursed his habitation:* nothy way of imprecation, but of denunciation of Gods judgements due unto them for their evill workes, shewing that they took such courses as did make them and theirs accursed, and bring the vengeance of God upon them: the meditation whereof was a strong bulwarke to fence him against all temptations unto the like sinfull and vile practises.

Iob 5.2.

Vse 2. 2 This maketh for the terrour of all such as doe drinke in sinne with greedinesse, and give allowance to themselves in blaspheming, in Sabbath-breaking, in wantonnesse, in lying, in slandering, and scoffing, and such other foule vices. If they be blessed that doe not worke iniquity, then cursed are they that make a common practise thereof.

Objection. But I hope (will some say) a mans heart may be good, though he over-shoot himselfe by rapping out an oath now and then, and by speaking foolishly and lightly, &c. you must not judge (say they) God knoweth our hearts.

Answ. He doth so indeed, and he hath made knowne unto us by his word, that an ill tongue & an ill life doe alwaies argue an ill heart, *For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh:* And a good tree cannot bring forth such rotten fruit, nor a pure fountaine send forth such muddy and filthy streames, as doe evermore issue forth at their profane mouthes: and are derived from their impure consciences unto all, or to the most part of their actions.

Luk. 5.45. Mat. 7.17.18.

Strict obedience to be laboured for. 2 Cor. 7.1.

Thou hast commanded to keepe thy precepts diligently.

The Doctrine that these words afford, is this, that nothing is superfluous that is done in obedience to Gods holy will.

The word translated *diligently*, doth signifie in the originall tongue (*wonderfull much*) so that the words go thus; *Thou hast commanded to keepe thy precepts wonderfull much.* And this the Apostle urgeth the Corinthians unto: *Having such promises beloved, let us purge our selves from al filthines of the flesh, & of the spirit*: that is, from all manner of corruption, as well inward as outward. And that was the drift of Iesus Christ in giving the true interpretation of the Law, which the Pharisies had

Mat. 5.6.7.

corrupted

corrupted by their falſe expoſitions; I ſay this was the drift, to draw men from reſting on the outward obſervation thereof, and to bring them to have regard unto their thoughts, and to the affections of their hearts: and moreover in their practiſe to doe thoſe things which heathen men and hypocrites could not attaine unto: and therefore he often urgeth this ſentence, to ſhew the ſlenderneſſe and inſufficiencie of their obedience: *What ſingular thing doe ye?* Implying that Chriſtians muſt in many things be ſingular, and differ from, and goe beyond the common ſort of men.

If one could doe as much good, as an hundred, yet he could not doe the hundreth part of that which a Chriſtian ought to performe. Let him ſay ſtill (for it is a truth) I am an unprofitable ſervant: I have done no more than my duty, nor ſo much as my duty. As Chriſt came to fulfill all that his Fathers Law required, ſo it behoveth us to obſerve every thing that we are commanded, though not in perfection, which wee cannot attaine unto: yet in uprightneſſe, and with our beſt endevours. When the *Iſraelites* told *Moſes*, that if hee would goe neere, and heare what the Lord ſaid, and declare it unto them, they would heare and doe all that the Lord ſhould ſay: the Lord himſelfe teſtified the equity of their words, *That they had well ſpoken, all that they ſpake, & wiſhed that there were ſuch an heart in them, to feare him, & to keep all his commandements alway: that it might goe well with them, and with their children after them.* Whereby we are informed what is acceptable unto God, and profitable for our ſelves: namely, intire obedience, and to the ſame purpoſe tendeth that ſerious inſtigation of *Paul* to the *Corinthians, Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye ſtedfaſt, unmoveable, abundant alwayes in the worke of the Lord: for as much as ye know that your labrm is not in vaine in the Lord.*

Luk. 17. 10.

Deut. 5. 28, 29.

1 Cor. 15. 58.

Reaſons.

1 Firſt, no vaine thing is commanded, but every precept that he giveth is holy, and every duty preſcribed to us is needfull to be performed, he requireth nothing but that which is good, and juſt: and who can charge us to doe more than enough, whiles wee deale onely in that which is juſt and good?

2 Secondly, the Lord desireth to be served with all due care and faithfulnesse. Can any man say, I am before hand with him, and I haue done more for his sake than he hath for mine? doe we not receive from him breath, and being and life, and living, and preservation, and salvation it selfe, and all things else?

3 Thirdly, our labour is not lost, nor travaile mispent in yeelding obedience to him: for he will reward it at the full, and above al desert; No man worketh for him without wages: not a godly action, not a godly word, not a godly purpose, not a godly motion of heart shall passe without pay and compensation.

4 Fourthly, every default and omission of well-doing, at every time deserveth damnation: and either shall be recompenced with the death of the sinner, or hath been already requited with the torments of Christ: which serveth

Vse 1. Against Popish observations.

1 For confutation of the Papists, that little regarding the commandements of God, expect great matters for their devotion, and their outward inuentions and observations: but who hath requited those things at their hands? the Lord commandeth them to keepe his precepts, otherwise they can expect no recompence from him, but that may be said of all their invented worship, which was spoken of them that were so full of externall ceremonies (as touch not, taste not, handle not) in the Apostles time: concerning all which he saith: *That they perish with the using, seeing they are after the commandements and doctrines of men.* So soone as the worke is done, the reward is gone. Col. 2. 22.

Against works of supererogation.

Besides, here may be confuted all their works of supererogation: If God commands us to observe his law in perfection, then what can there be left for them to performe beyond that which he commandeth? Doth Christ bid us say, that *when we have done all that we can, we are unprofitable servants*, and have performed no more than our duties? and will they be so audacious as to bragge of an overplus of well-doing? Is it possible for obedience to exceed the commandement? or for ought to be any thing worth that is not done in obedience? But to let them passe.

This

This is for our instruction: hath God enjoyned us to observe his precepts so exceeding carefully and diligently? then let nothing draw us there-from, no not in the least circumstance: let us esteeme nothing needlesse, frivolous, or superfluous, that we have a warrant for out of his word; nor count those too wise or precise that will stand resolutely upon the same: if the Lord require any thing, though the world should gainesay it, and we be derided and abused for the doing of it, yet let us proceed still in the course of our obedience.

Sithence our Master doth require it as due, and it becommeth us to yeeld it as a duty, and our hire is so great for the performance of the same, which will also be inlarged as our integrity shall be increased; the greater our faithfulnesse shall be found, the more praise we shall obtaine, accompanied proportionably with all other good blessings, & let this be a motive further to incite us to such diligence, that the Lord is much displeased with remissenesse and negligence: slothfull persons are every where reprehended in the Scriptures, even for being idle in humane affaires, and matters that concerne mens present estate: much more then doe they deserve to bee sharply reproved, and also corrected for their carelesnesse in those holy workes, where-about God setteth them: hee that doth not as much as he may in the services of God may looke to have more strokes from his hand, and rebukes from his mouth, than will be for his comfort.

THE EIGHTH SERMON.

IOHN 6. 26, 27.

Iesus answered them, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seeke me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye eate of the loaves, and were filled.

Labour not for the meate that perisheth, but for the meat that indureth unto everlasting life, which the Sonne of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

THe fleshly followers of our Lord Iesus Christ, having bin miraculously relieved at his hand with corporall food once, expect as much again: & not finding him in one place, where it was likely he would have bin, they seeke him in another, where without a miracle he could not be: for the sea was betweene the, & Ship they knew there was none left to transport him, wherby they took occasion to demād of him when he came thither, insinuating that they cōjectured how he came thither, even by walking upon the waters. To these our Saviour directeth the words of this Text, & others that follow: not answring to that questiō how he came, because it sauoured of adulatiō, & was somwhat frivolous; but discovering their purpose, why they came, and that was hypocriticall & carnall. Now for the sense of the words, where he layeth to their charge, that *they sought him not, because they saw the miracle*: it is to be understood, that they apprehended not his divine nature, nor sought to know him as God and their Redeemer, by vertue of the miracle, but onely hoped that he would worke another to feed their bodies againe, and make them to fare well often. And having reprooved them, he proceedeth to instruct them, prescribing a more wise and

profitable

profitable course for themselves and their soules: and that is, to preferre things that are everlasting, before those that are perishable and momentany. Not that he precisely forbiddeth to labour for food, and other maintenance, but to labour covetously with too greedy a desire; to labour immoderately, and with too great travel: to labour principally for that which is earthly, and more remisly for that which is heavenly; this is that which he here forbiddeth. *By meat*, figuratively so called, *which endureth unto everlasting life*, he meaneth the gifts and graces of Gods holy Spirit, whereby the soules of his people receive strength and comfort constantly: even untill the fruition of that blisse and immortality, whereunto they shall attaine for evermore hereafter.

Now for their better assurance, that they might certainly know that they should not lose their labour in seeking for this durable food, this bread of life, himselfe undertaketh to bestow it upon them: and that by the appointment of God his Father, who hath sealed him to this office, as Princes, and great men do authentically confirme the authority of those whom they imploy in weighty affaires, by their seales and letters Patents.

This answer therefore of Christ, consisteth of two parts:

A { Reprehension. / Exhortation.

In the reprehension he declareth:

1 What they neglected: they made not a profitable use of the miracle which they saw.

2 Wherein they transgressed; they had a sinister respect in seeking of him: it was for their bellies sake, and not for conscience sake.

In the exhortation, he perswadeth them most to affect the spirituall meat, by two arguments:

{ 1 In regard of the goodnesse and lastingnesse of it: *It endureth unto everlasting life.* / 2 In regard of the Author of it: { 1 Christ giving it: / 2 The Father ordaining it to be given by Christ.

The words which they spake to Christ were reverent, they called him *Rabbi*, and tooke knowledge in some sort of his strange manner of passing over the Sea; and had before in

verse 14. testified that of a truth, *Hee was the Prophet that should come into the world.* And not so onely, but as it appeareth in vers. 15. *They minded to take him, and make him a King:* yet the first answer that he giveth unto them is a rebuke: whereby we learne that

Doct. 1. Our best freinds must be admonished

By faire speeches to us, or courteous usage of us, we ought not to be stayed from telling men of their faults, when by our calling we are required to admonish them.

It beseemeth not a good man, to suffer his heart to be as it were bribed with kindnes, that his mouth should be stopped, when God and fit opportunitie calleth upon him to open it. Though *Belshazzar* would needs have *Daniel clothed with purple, and a chaine of gold put about his necke,* with promise of great preferment, yet *Daniel* spared not to tell *Belshazzar* that he had lift up himself against the Lord of heaven, and profaned his holy vessels, and praised idols, and not glorified the God in whose hand was his breath, and all his wayes. Dan. 5.

The example also of *Elisha* will prove this unto us; when *Jehoram* the king of *Israel* made suit unto him for the obtaining of water for himselfe, & two kings more, together with all their Host, telling him that they were undone, and should fall into the hand of their enemies if he did not helpe at this pinch, & in this great strait; notwithstanding this submisse and humble manner of entreaty, he spareth him not, being a wretched Idolater, but answereth him roundly and sharply, *What have I to do with thee* (saith he) *get thee to the Prophets of thy fathers, &c. As the Lord liveth, in whose sight I stand, if it were not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat King of Judah, I would not have looked towards thee, nor seene thee.* Mark how lightly he setteth by this wicked king: telling him that hee would not give him so much as a good looke, much lesse be an instrument of relieving him & his Army, were it not for good *Jehoshaphats* sake, whose heart was upright with God, though he were faulty in joyning with those Idolaters. And againe, when *Hazael* came unto him, with a present of every good thing of *Damascus*, as much as forty camels could carry, and used him with all reverent respect, calling him, *My Lord*, &c. yet he dealt plainly with him, and with teares told him what

2 King. 3. 13. 14

2 King. 8. 9, 12.

a tyrant he should be, and what havocke he should make amongst the people of God. So Christ Iesus, an undoubted patterne for our imitation, when he came to *Martha*, a good woman, and very loving and kind unto him: yet being more carefull to make provision for her body, than to get provision for her owne soule, & finding fault with her sister *Mary*, that was better imployed than her self, Christs mouth was not stopped with her meat, for he reproveth her, and commendeth her sister, saying, *Martha, Martha, thou carest and art troubled about many things, but one thing is needfull: Mary hath chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.* Luk. 11. 41. 42

Now the reason of this doctrine, is, First, in respect of them, because otherwise we should deale unfaithfully with such as deale kindly with us, and when they shew their love unto us, we should shew our hatred towards them: if we do not helpe them when we have a calling, and some likelihood of doing them good, it were as great an injury, as if when a Patient speaketh friendly to his Physitian, and telleth him that he will content him at full for all his care and paines that he shal take, he thereupon should grow more remisse and careless, and give him ranke poyson, instead of wholsome receits, and curing medicines. 1. *Reason.*

2. In respect of our selves, if we be slacke in admonishing our friends of things amisse in them, because they speake lovingly, and carry themselves in a friendly manner towards us, we shall thereby provoke Gods displeasure against us: and so their faire words and cheerfull lookes, shall make God looke angerly upon us, and speake sharply unto us, and we by our silence, or by our flattery, shal make their sinne to become our owne, and so both we and they shall be punished together.

This maketh for the just reproofe of those that frame all their praises and dispraises, according as they themselves are dealt withall: if they be well spoken of and well used, they will be altogether for the parties that do so befriend them, and they shall be sure of their good word: but if others be preferred and they neglected, especially if upon their just desert they bee roundly taxed and reproved, then the case is altered, and the streame of their commendation turned another way. *Vse 1.*

in ſtead of their former ſpeeches of approbation, you ſhall heare from them bitter invectives, and tearmes of reproach, much unbeſeeming the mouth of a civill man; much more of a Chriſtian. Of this ſort were thoſe falſe and deceitful Prophets, which were likened to dogs: let men caſt a bone unto them, as it were, and fill their mouthes with ſomewhat now and then, and they will fawne upon them, and tell them their caſe is good, they ſhall be ſure of peace and proſperity. God is well pleaſed, and all things ſhall go well with them, albeit in the meane while, they be the moſt vile and wretched men in the world. But as for thoſe that will not feed their covetous humor, though they were the beſt men that lived upon the earth, they ſhall taſte of their doggiſh behaviour: they ſhall be ſnarled at, if not bitten: if they put not into their mouthes (ſaith the Prophet) *they prepare war againſt them*, they furniſh themſelves with a number of bitter and biting reproofes, with a multitude of heavy and grievous threatnings to powre out againſt them in full meaſure. But theſe are farre from our Saviours ſpirit, who would frame his ſpeeches to the good of all without exception: not ſparing thoſe that were kinde unto him, nor laying loade on men for with-holding kindnes from him, ſpeaking not pleaſing but profitable things unto all ſorts. Thus true and fervent love unto God and men, made him to deale, and ſelfe-love and ſelfe-reſpect, maketh falſe-hearted hypocrites to take a quite contrary courſe.

Mich. 3 5.

Vſe 2. Here is a matter of inſtruction for us, to imitate our Saviour in this point, and of a great comfort unto ſuch as (in a zeale of Gods glory and compaſſion over the ſoules of men, and in conſcience of diſcharging their owne duty) ſeeke to recompence naturall kindnes with ſpiritual kindnes: and when men ſhew their love unto them in a civill manner, do endevor to requite it in a Chriſtian manner, as well as in the like kind: and do not ſuffer the faire ſpeeches or good turnes of any, ſo farre to dazle their eyes that they cannot ſee, or to tie their tongues that they cannot ſpeake againſt thoſe things that are amiſſe in them; but deale faithfully with their ſouls in that behalfe; howſoever they may ſometimes beare the imputation of inhumanity and indiſcretion, yet if they deale wiſely & mercifully, as our Savi-

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our did, though not in the like perfection, they may take comfort therein. For howsoever ignorant and carnal mens tongues be against them, the testimony of God, and of their consciences will be for them, and beare them out against all calumniations and reviling speeches, that are invented to defame and disgrace them: and this shall be found true, when all men shal be proved lyars, that he that reproveth (when he hath just cause and calling thereunto) *shall finde more favour at length than he that flattereth.* And thus much for the generall doctrine. Now let us consider the words more particularly.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seeke me not, &c.

In that Christ Iesus taketh notice of the disposition and inclination of their hearts that do now follow him, and intended the filling of their bellies, though they pretended to seeke after the satisfying of their soules; the doctrine hence to be collected, is this: that our Lord Iesus Christ is acquainted with the purposes of such as come to his services, and to the meanes of their salvation. *Doct. 2.*

He observeth what is the principall end that they ayme at, as we may see in this place: they affoord Christ very good words, and are ready to acknowledge the miracle that he had wrought, and yet he doth not onely see; but narrowly looke into that fleshly respect that they had in comming unto him, and tels them plainly of their hypocrisie, and that with a protestation, *Verily, verily, &c. q.d.* I say it for a truth, disprove me if you can, and I avouch it againe, because it is a matter of weight, that you come to feed your bodies under pretence of feeding your soules. And as he did descend into their hearts, and finde out their fraud and guile, so doth he continually behold all the windings and turnings that are in the hearts of the sonnes of men. This may appeare in the Gospel of *John*, where it is said, *that many believed in his name when they saw the miracles that he did:* they were moved in a sudden passion upon the sight of such great wonders, to thinke that he was the Christ: but (it is added) Iesus did not *commit himselfe unto them*, he would not trust the (notwithstanding the faire shew they made) *because he knew them all, and had no need that any should testifie of man: for he knew what was in man:* he perceived

Christ is the searcher of the heart.

Iohn 2. 23, 24, 25.

ved that they were not ſound, whatſoever others thought of them, neither did he ſtand in need of the teſtimony of any, that ſhould tell him this man is upright, this man is not; for he knoweth a mans heart better than himſelfe doth: and it may be made yet more cleare, by reaſon that God is privy to mens thoughts, becauſe he firſt publiſheth them; ſecondly, reproveth them; thirdly, puniſheth them.

Reaſon.

Ezek. 14. 13.

1 He publiſheth mens thoughts.

Firſt, that he publiſheth them to others, is apparant in *Ezekiel*, where the Lord telleth the Prophet, that howſoever *the Elders of Iſrael came unto him, and ſate before him*, yet *they had ſet up idols in their hearts*: and howſoever they would have men to beleeve that they were the holy ſervants of God, that they loved the word of God, and came to heare what he would teach them; yet the Lord declareth unto *Ezekiel*, that their hearts were not withdrawne from idolatry and ſuperſtition, and therefore that he ſhould thinke never the better of them for their outward ſemblance of Religion.

Reproveth them. Matth. 9. 4.

Secondly, as he publiſheth mens thoughts to others, ſo he reproveth them for the ſame himſelfe: as the Evangeliſt teſtifieth, *When Jeſus ſaw their thoughts, he ſaid: Wherefore thinke ye evill thoughts in your hearts?* Where it is plaine, that therefore he rebuked them, becauſe he diſcerneth the corruptneſſe of their thoughts, in judging hardly of him, becauſe he had ſaid to the man ſicke of the palſie, *Thy ſinnes are forgiven thee*. And indeed what equity were it that Chriſt ſhould blame men for their cogitations, unleſſe he were the ſearcher of the heart? It is indiſcretion, and an injurious part for a man to finde fault, unleſſe he can directly prove that which he layeth to another mans charge: and how much unbeſeeming the infinite wiſedome and righteouſneſſe of Chriſt muſt we needs thinke it then to deale with any in that ſort? Nay, he forbiddeth us to judge raſhly, and commandeth us to judge righteous judgement, and therefore he will much more obſerve that rule himſelfe.

3 He puniſheth them.

Thirdly, he doth correct and puniſh men for their perverſe and naughtie imaginations and affections, and therefore he muſt needs be a diſcerner of the ſame: for otherwiſe how ſhould he proceed according to every mans deſert? And that

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he doth inflict punishment on men for thoughts, the Prophet *Isaiah* sheweth when God chargeth the people, that *though their bodies were neere him, yet their hearts were removed farre from him:* and therefore he threatneth that he *will do a marvellous work with them*, to wit, that *the wisdome of the wise should perish, &c.* that he would infatuate them, and give them up to blindnesse of minde, and to sensleſnesse of heart, as after wards it fell out in their children the Scribes and Pharisees, to whom all things that Christ Iesus spake, seemed Parables, so that they knew not the mysteries of the kingdome of heaven, but had eyes and saw not, eares and heard not, hearts and minds, and understood not the things that were taught them. And as God doth lay judgements upon the soules of men, which are the most grievous, so doth he also on their bodies, even for their defects & wants, as we see in the *Corinthians*, amongst whom *many were sicke, many weake*, and many smitten with the stroke of death, because they came negligently and unpreparedly unto the Lords Table: and so doth his heavy hand lye upon many now-adayes, being strucke with the pestilence, and such like plagues of God, for comming prophanely, irreligiously, and hypocritically to the Word and Sacrament: not in outward appearance for ought that we can see, but before the Lords eyes who searcheth the heart and reines, and layeth his corrections, according to the measure of mens inward, prophane, and lewd disposition. Now this he would not do, unlesse he could prove them guilty: but indeed he is able to indite them, and to produce witnesses against them, that these and these have beene their secret sinnes, such and such vile thoughts they had at such a Sermon, at such a Sacrament, and their hearts were wandring about their pleasures and profits: they were full of malicious & revengefull imaginations & intents, nothing regarding Gods presence, nothing affecting nor reverencing his ordinances: & these things he can make their own consciences to testifie against them, & therfore doth justly plague them for the same. And as in this life, so at that great assises at the last day, the Lord *will lighten things that be hid in darknesse, and make the counsell of mans heart manifest*: & bring every secret thing to judgement, whether good or evil, that all may

Isa. 29. 13.

In their soules.

In their bodies.

As in this life so in that which is to come.

may receive according to their workes.

If then all ſhall be at that time judged and rewarded, according to their thoughts, moſt ſure it is, that God well obſerved the ſame while they lived upon the face of the earth, and kept the ſame in his booke of records.

Vſe 1. Sincerity in Gods ſervices.

Since the Lord marketh whether men come in love and in ſinceritie, or for faſhion and in hypocriſie, let this teach us to preſent our ſoules before the Lord, and ſo ſerve him ſoundly and religiouſly: not onely behaving our ſelves in as orderly a manner as others do, but in as holy a manner as we can. Divers there are that will repaire to Gods houſe as often as the beſt, and make a colourable ſhew of reverence in Gods worſhip, ſitting modeſtly in the view of the congregation, not gazing hither and thither, nor expreſſing any unſeemly behaviour: yet nevertheleſſe except God ſee their hearts well exerciſed, all that men behold and take notice of is nothing worth. They ſeemed to be very forward, of whom the Prophet *Iſaiah* maketh mention, they would enquire after the ordinances of judgement and juſtice, and ſeeke the Lord, and not by fits and ſtarts, but daily: they would be ordinarily at the Lectures of the Prophets, and peradventure marke what was delivered, and make repetition of the ſame; and if there were any thing that they underſtood not, they would aske direction, and ſearch out the meaning of it: and yet the Prophet is bid to cry out againſt them with full mouth: *Cry aloud* (ſaith God) *lift up thy voyce like a Trumper, and ſhew my people their tranſgreſſions, and to the houſe of Jacob their ſinnes.* And that becauſe they came with hollow and hypocriticall hearts, as their unholy and unrighteous behaviour afterwards did witneſſe to their faces.

Iſa. 58. 2.

And therefore that muſt be looked unto, that we ſatisfie Gods eyes, as well as mens, and to that end ſearch out, and caſt forth all leaven of hypocriſie that is in our hearts: for if we do not finde it out, God will: and if we ſpare our hearts, God will not ſpare us. Well we may delude our owne ſoules, but God is not mocked: outward ſerving of him may make the Miniſter think us upright, & cauſe our neighbours to eſteeme us good Chriſtians: but except God approve of our hearts,

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we are never the better, for the good opinion that men conceive of us.

2 This is for the exceeding comfort of such as are true-hearted, and that in a double respect:

1 In regard of that approbation which the Lord will give us, if he be a witnesse of our sincerity and faithfulnesse. If wee come to the Sermon in obedience to Gods ordinance, with a desire to get grace thereby: if we come to the Sacrament, that we may have communion with our head Christ Iesus, & that the new Testament or Covenant of God, may be sealed and confirmed unto us; if we see our weakenesse, and labour to get strength against it; if we bewaile our corruption, and strive to get victory over it: if wee perceive the imbecilitie of our faith, and would have it increased: or want of repentance, and would have it renewed: or defect of love, and would have it augmented; and so come to Gods holy feast with an hungry appetite; we may comfortably partake of his heavenly mysteries; & whatsoever we imagine of our selves, God will reward us according to that integrity which he seeth in us. Well was it for *Nathaniel* that his heart was known unto Christ, for otherwise he had lost the praise of his uprightnesse. And so is it with many Christians: if one should demand of them whether they had faithfull hearts or not, the answere of many would be, I hope well; but in truth I dare not say so much; and therefore this is not the least part of their happinesse, that God discerneth the truth of their hearts better than they themselves doe: and whereas there is some deceitfulnesse in the most sincere and plaine heart that is, if there be any endeavour to shake it off, the Lord will certainely pardon and remove the same. *Vse* 2. Consolation, In regard of 1 Discouragement.

2 Secondly, here is matter of consolation to those that are sound hearted, in regard of the clamors and slanders that are raised against them: they are usually charged to be all hypocrites, troublers of the places where they live, and such as altogether serve their owne turns, in that profession of religion which they make: here is their comfort, the Lord knoweth their hearts; and he will cleere the innocent, and make their righteousnesse shine forth as the noone day: as hee will judge 2 Offenders.

and

and condemne all hypocrites, so will he manifest the faithfulnesse of his owne servants; and this was *Iobs* comfort when his friends counted him a dissembler: *My witnesse is in the heavens* (saith he) *and my record is on high.*

Iob 16.19.

Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for the meat that, &c. q.d. You cannot doe both together, you cannot seeke the things of this life, and the things that pertaine to a better life both at once: whence this doctrine ariseth, that

Vse 3.

A man cannot be a worldling and a Christian.

A man cannot be both a worldling and a Christian, these two are opposed and set one against the other, as things that cannot stand together: one cannot labour for these transitory things, that is, set his whole desire upon them, and bend his whole indevour for the obtaining of them; and withall labour for better matters, and religiously and unfainedly seeke after them. He that pursueth after earthly things, cannot follow after heavenly things: and he that followeth after heavenly things, will not pursue after earthly things. Not but that one may be truly religious, and yet enjoy the commodities of this life: but he cannot set his heart upon them, and upon matters of godlinesse: also no man can be earthly minded and spiritually affected at one and the same time: nor seeke that happinesse which is aboue, & that which is beneath at once: in which regard the holy Ghost maketh an opposition betwixt them, saying; *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world: if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him:* Whence it is evident that a mans affection cannot be fastened both on the world and on God. He may use the world, and yet love God: but he cannot love the world, but it will exclude the love of God: hee that maketh it his felicity to enjoy the things of this life, *the love of the Father is not in him*, neither doth he love the Father, nor apprehend the Fathers love unto him. But what are those things of the world which we must not love? he telleth us in the ver. following; *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, & the pride of life.* Where by the *lust of the flesh*, are all kind of concupiscences meant, as in eating & drinking, and such like sensualitie. 2 By *the lust of the eyes*, are meant all such things as content the eyes, as fair houses, goodly pastures, great store of cattell, gorgeous furniture, &c.

1 Ioh. 2. 15, 16.

3 By

3 By *the pride of life* is meant an ambitious desire of advancement & dignity, or to become great me in the world any way, either in place or estimation, for any speciall parts or endowments. All the things of the world may be drawn unto one of these three heads; of pleasure, profit, or credit. And concerning al these, he saith, that they *are not of the Father*: honest delights, wealth, & preferment are from the Father, but the love of these is not from the Father, but from the world: & therfore whosoever inordinately affecteth the, is a worldling, not a Christian. Therfore the Apostle exhorteth the *Colossians*, *If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, and set your affections on things which are above: & not on things which are beneath*, implying that they could not doe both. It is as possible for a man to rise & fall, to clime upward, & to descend downward at the same instant, as to be godly & worldly, to ascend to heaven-wards, and to grovel to the earth-wards; they cannot be verified of the same person, at one and the same time. Col. 3. 1, 2.

The reason is taken from that of our Saviours: *No man can serve two masters*; for being of contrary dispositions and affections, as God & the world, or rather the Prince of the world are, either of them would be whole Master, and requireth the whole man. Doth voluptuousnesse take place in the heart? it wil not indure any matters of religio to be thought of, or spoken of; but that must have the ordering of the cogitations of the minde, and of the speeches of the mouth, & of the actions of the body. Doth worldlinesse or haughtinesse beare sway? then will they extinguish all the sparks of goodnesse that are in a man, & quite put out the light of religion, carrying all the meditations and practises of the party towards the obtaining of that which is aymed at. On the contrary, if religion once get the better, & begin to rule in the heart, it will root out sin, & make those that were Sathās bondslaves before, to become Gods free men: it will by degrees kill lust, and covetousnesse, and pride: grace will be still increasing, and corruption decreasing, so that they can never agree together, no more than can fire and water. *Reasons.* Matth. 6.

Which is for the confutation & overthrow of that dangerous errour that is in the most part of men, that take it to be a

notable point of wisedome to joyne these together, to be routers in the earth, and yet professors of the Gospell: so ordering the matter that they will neither bee so apparantly prophane as others that notoriously practise impiety and wickednesse; neither be so strict as others that exercise sound mortification and holinesse. And herein they glory, that they can carry the credit both of husbands for the world, and of wise dealers for their soules: that they can enjoy a present happinesse in this life beyond the best, and yet live in hope of blessednesse in the life to come as well as the best, and therein they applaud their owne wisedome, and have themselves in admiration, and for want of this they censure their betters of folly, and have them in derision. But of all silly men these are the sillyest, that think they can serve both God and Mammon, the Lord and the world. Christ had not found out the depth of that wisedome; hee professeth that his Kingdome was not of this world, and biddeth us *labour for the food that indureth to eternall life, and not for that which perisheth.* And therfore howsoever these vaine men blesse themselves in the high estimation of their great policy, yet they doe very palpably bewray their grosse ignorance and simplicity, as all shall doe that will try conclusions contrary to Christs conclusions; whatsoever they dreame of, in seeking for both, they lose both, they have neither found comfort in God, nor true contentment in the world.

Yet how generall is this errour amongst the sonnes of men? they make some reckoning that there is a God, and therefore they will now and then heare a Sermon, sit at it, and speake of it, but never make use of any thing that crosseth them in their pleasures or profits: they will make a shew of keeping the Sabbath, by frequenting the publike exercises of religion; but when they are over, they betake them to their sports and recreations: But what will be the issue of these things? Our Saviour telleth us in the Gospel: for when men shall say unto him, *Lord, Lord,* and bragge of the workes they have done in his name, he wil *professe unto them, I never knew you,* (or acknowledged you for mine) *depart frō me ye that work iniquity.* Therfore it standeth men vpon to have regard hereunto, that they

Math. 7. 12 23.

deceive

deceive not themselves, in thinking to haue fellowship with God & *Belial* together: the Apostle *Paul* telleth such persons of their end: *Many there are* (saith he) *whose God is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, which minde earthly things.* They were professours, and would make shewes of religion, for else the Apostle would not have taken the matter so to heart: but they tooke carnall courses; they were addicted to their bellies, and sought preferment in the world, and minded those things that are here below; but their glory was their shame, & their pleasure their perdition: and whereas they pleased themselves in their wisedome, the Apostle could not speake of them, but he must weepe for them: *Of whom* (saith he) *I told you before, and now tell you weeping, &c.*

2 Seeing that we cannot set our affections both on carnall things, and on spirituall, let us reject the worst, and imbrace the best: let us leave the things that are momentany, and lay fast hold on the things that are eternall, and that we may be perswaded hereunto the rather, let us weigh with our selves what our Saviour here saith of this temporall food: *He calleth it meat that doth perish.* And the like may be said of all other things: Labour not for the wealth that perisheth. When we have gotten all that may be gotten, what is it? it is but a corruptible treasure, that is quickly gone: *Hee that getteth riches, & not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his daies, and at his end shal be a foole.* When men have heaped up all the wealth that possibly they can, it is but as a great heap of snow, let the Sunne of Gods displeasure arise upon it, and it presently melteth and vanisheth: but suppose riches doe continue with us, there is such corruption in our hearts, that they are rather likely to poyson and infect us, than any way to further us in the course of godlinesse: therefore are they called *wicked Mammon.* We doe account him a silly man, that will accept of money, or meate, or garments, that are suspected to be infectious, in that they come from such as have had the plague-sore running upon them: and yet certainely these things cannot be in any degree so dāgerous as riches are unto those that lay open their hearts as it were to entertaine the love of them: the former do but indanger this [illegible]

Vse 2.

Ier. 17. 11.

the latter do undoubtedly (without repentance) deprive men of everlasting life: and therfore exceeding great is their madnesse that will so eagerly pursue after such vanities, especially seeing by reason of the uncertainty of their life, they have not any assurance to enjoy them, no not one houre; whereas Grace (as after shall be shewed) is an incomparable & an incorruptible jewell, which they must needs forgoe while they so greedily hunt after these trifles of the world. But that there be no mistaking of that which hath beene spoken, we must understand that the purpose of it hath not beene to withdraw any from labouring in his calling, and providing for himselfe and his family: but onely to perswade men in all their labours to serve God, & in seeking earthly things, to propose unto themselves an heavenly end; that in following the world, they may not forsake God; and in getting the things that are fading and perishable, they doe not lose the thing that are permanent and eternall.

But for the meat that indureth to everlasting life.

We heard what we must not labour for: now Christ sheweth what we must labour for, to wit, grace & the means thereof; whence the doctrine is, that

Doct. 4. **They are the best husbands that labour most for grace.** *Prou.* 3. 4.

They are most provident for themselves, whose greatest labour is for grace.

Therefore seeing it cannot be attained unto without diligence, Christs counsell is to use all carefull indeavour to get it: So likewise *Salomon* adviseth us to *seeke for understanding as for silver, and to search for it as for treasures*. So that it is Gods ordinance that men should labour for it, if they woul dhave it. Earthly things will not be had but by labour and toyle, much lesse these things which are of greater value. And whereas men may set others a work for the obtaining of outward matters, they themselves may be at home in their houses, and others labouring for them abroad; it is otherwise in the matters of Grace, a man must travell for it in his own person, if ever he intend to get it: he himselfe must pray, heare the Word, understand it, apply it, and make use of it: the greatest Monarch in the world must performe these and the like duties, and not bid his servants doe these things for him. And to incourage us

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the rather to ſet upon this worke, the Lord hath promiſed us certain ſucceſſe, as in that former place of the *Proverbs*: *If thou ſeekeſt her as ſilver, &c. then ſhalt thou finde the knowledge of God.* Others may take a great deale of paines, & yet not ſpeed well: they may riſe early, & go to bed late, and eat the bread of carefulneſſe, hoping to be rich, and yet be ſtill poore; men may labour to be applauded of all, and yet be derided of all; ſeeke to have all crouch unto them, and yet have all to lift up themſelves againſt them; ſtudy and beat their heads how to live a pleaſant life, and yet none be more vexed and tormented than they: but thoſe that ſpend their pains in ſeeking of grace, ſhall never loſe their labour, nor miſſe of their marke, but alwaies obtaine that which they doe deſire; & when once they have poſſeſſion of it, it will abide with them; they cannot loſe it though they would; it is ſo durable and permanent, that it will never decay, and ſo united and ingrafted into the nature of the parties, that it can by no poſſible means be wholy taken away, nay nor caſt away. And therefore as in other things, ſo in this, the continuance of it addeth greatly unto the worth of it. To have a Leaſe is better than to be Tenant at will: a fee-ſimple is more deſirable then a leaſe; now grace is a perpetuall inheritance that farre ſurpaſſeth all that the world can afford. A man muſt leave his earthly inheritance and abundance, hee knoweth not how ſoone, neither can his great ſubſtance deſcend into the grave with him, neither can he ſo make it over unto his ſeed, but that they may be defrauded of it: but the heavenly treaſure is ours whiles we live, & when we dye, & after death, yea at, and after the reſurrection for evermore. And as the perpetuity, ſo alſo the excellency of this in it own nature ſhould be a forcible motive unto us, and ſet an edge upon our affections to purſue after it continually. For whereas other things are dangerous and hurtfull, this is alwaies profitable & helpfull; it maketh us bleſſed in this preſent life, and in the life to come; it bringeth with it the cõfort of the ſpirit, the feeling of Gods love & favour, and the comfortable uſe of all outward good things. We are not likely, at leaſt not certain, to continue here many daies, & what an unſpeakeable comfort then is it to be aſſured that when we go from men, we ſhall go to God,

Reaſons.

Pro. 2.5.

1 Pet. 1.4.

Pſal. 49.17.

and when we leave the earth, we ſhall inherit heaven, that we ſhall have peace at our death, and glory after our death? If the peſtilence enter into our houſes, or take hold of our owne perſons, when none dare comunto us, then God will bee with us: though our bodies be infected, yet our ſoules can never be ſo infected, in we have grace in our harts, but that God dareth to enter into our houſes to viſit us; and when our ſoules ſhall be parted from our bodies, he will not thinke it too much to give them a place of reſt with himſelfe in his own kingdome, and at length to unite them to our bodies againe, that they may enjoy everlaſting bliſſe together, as they have beene imployed in Gods ſervice together.

Vſe 1. Seeing then, that the benefit of labouring for grace, is ſo great, this ſerveth to reprove thoſe that are ſloathfull in the things of God: ſlothfull in repairing to the word, & in mingling the ſame with faith in their hearts: ſlothfull in travelling with their owne ſoules, in examining their hearts, and laying the edge of Gods threatnings to their corruptions, for the cutting off of the ſame. Theſe men thinke that grace will grow as weeds doe, without any plowing, manuring or ſowing of the ground: though they never pray earneſtly, nor heare carefully, nor be at any paines for the reforming of their hearts, or of their lives, yet they thinke they ſhall have goodneſſe enough by an ordinary courſe, and conclude that heaven ſhall be caſt upon them whether they wil or not: as if God could not chuſe, but ſave their ſoules. But theſe fooliſh men doe altogether deceive themſelves, & they ſhall find by wofull experience, that except they ſet their minds, & hearts, and tongues, and hands, and all the powers and parts of ſoule and body on work, they ſhall never attaine unto any godlineſſe at all, and therefore of neceſſity be deprived of everlaſting life.

Objection. But we like of the Word, and love the preaching and Preachers thereof. But what meaſure of faith and of other graces of Gods ſpirit have you gotten thereby? if you be deſtitute of thoſe, it is ſure you have not laboured as you ſhould for the

Anſwer. ſame: for *whoſoever ſeeketh, findeth.* Talking of gold and ſilver, and the like, & declaring to others how much we affect them, wil not keep us from penury: we muſt ſo labour for them, as

that

that we get them, if we would be rich men. A ſluggard may deſire to get the victory, but he muſt fight for it that will have it: and the like holds in ſpirituall things, thoſe that would be partakers of them, muſt uſe the meanes that God hath appointed for the accompliſhing of their deſire.

And therefore this rebuke lights upon the heads of all ſuch ſluggards, as will not beſtirre them in this weighty matter, nor labour in the field of grace, nay when the crop of grace is brought home unto their houſes, they will not open their doores to receive it: they will not ſo much as give attention to the word, but are like the high-way ſide, that doth not ſo much as receive the ſeed that is caſt upon it, but let the devill catch it away all from them.

Secondly, this may be an Apology for thoſe that are faithfull and painfull, in ſeeking for the Word: if it be a thing ſo exceeding neceſſary, then are not they to be blamed, that are content to undergo any toyle for the obtaining of it: it is no preciſenes nor needles labours: neither are ſuch to be checked and reprehended, but rather to be commended & encouraged: for this is it that is foretold in *Daniel: Many ſhall runne to and fro, and knowledge ſhall abound.* If men have a dangerous ſickneſſe, they ſeeke helpe from the Phyſitian though farre off, and none findes fault with them, nor makes queſtion, why they ſhould ſeeke to be healed. If houſe-holders want proviſion at home, they will repaire to the Market, and none cries out upon them, What wretched men are theſe that cannot keepe them from the Market? have they not oxen & ſheep at home? yet though they have, men are ſo wiſe as to conſider that they are not made ready for their turne. Now if they are not blamed, nor indeed blame-worthy, that do thus ſeeke for corporall Phyſicke, and food, then why ſhould they be blamed by Papiſts, and ſuch as are Popiſhly affected, that ſeeke for that which is ſpiritual, it being farre more requiſite and neceſſary?

Vſe 2.

Dan. 12. 4.

See the 2 Sermon on Mark 14. *Doct. 6.*

Which the Sonne of man ſhall give, &c. Doct.

The efficacie of the Word and Sacrament, is from Chriſts own hand. Whoſoever would have grace, muſt receive it fro Chriſt himſelf: hence is that promiſe made unto the *Iſraelites: The Lord thy God will circumciſe thy heart; and the heart of thy ſeed*

Doct. 5. The efficacie of the Word and Sacrament of Chriſt.

seed that thou muſt love the Lord thy God, with all thine heart, and with all thy ſoule, that thou mayeſt live. They to whom it did belong to circumciſe their bodies, could go no further than the outward circumciſion: it was God only that could cut off the corruption of their hearts, & frame them unto obedience: and that which is ſpoken concerning that one Sacrament, holdeth us true in all the reſt: man can give onely the externall ſignes, God muſt give the inward vertue. And the reaſons why it pertaines unto Chriſt, and is a work of the Godhead onely, are divers. Firſt, one is taken out of the Text, where it is ſaid: *Him hath the Father ſealed:* it is Chriſt his office unto which the Father hath ordained him: he alone hath commiſſion and warrant to deale in it: and whoſoever elſe doth arrogate that unto himſelfe, is an intruder, and ſhall be puniſhed, for that he goeth about to thruſt Chriſt out of his chaire.

Reaſons. 1.

2. Secondly, as it belongs to him, ſo he alone is of ability to do it: none beſides him can deale with the heart, wherein this worke doth principally conſiſt. He onely knowes it, and he alone can cure it: as the firſt *Adam* did kill us, ſo the ſecond *Adam* muſt quicken us. No man can give naturall life unto another, no not that which brutiſh creatures do enjoy, nay nor ſo much as that which plants do live by: much leſſe can any one give ſpirituall life unto another. *Paul* may plant, and *Apollos* may water, but God alone giveth the increaſe.

1 Cor. 15. 45.

3. Thirdly, experience will confirme us in this point: for who be the men upon whom the Ordinances of God are uſually moſt effectuall? even the moſt unlikely of all other in the eye of reaſon, many of them having bin very ſilly & of marvellous weak and ſlender capacity: others violently carried with ſundry grievous and ſtrong corruptions, of anger, pride, raging luſt, and the like. And herein doth the power of God more clearly manifeſt it ſelf in overthrowing the ſtrong holds of the devill, &c. Our Saviour magnifieth Goes name, ſaying, *I praiſe thee Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and revealed them unto babes:* And when the Apoſtle had ſpoken of many notorious and abhominable ſinners, as fornicators, Idolaters, adulterers, buggerers, &c. he addeth, *And ſuch were ſome of ye, but ye are waſhed,*

Mat. 11. 25.
1 Cor. 6. 9, 10, 11.

washed, but ye are sanctified, &c. If we might make the choice of those that should be converted, we should have good natured civill men, and wise and politicke men, and noble and great men to fill up the number, that God might that way be more honoured, and religion countenanced: but God in his wisedome taketh another course that maketh more for his glory: he chuseth the worst to make them best: and *not many wise, nor many noble are called.* 1 Cor. 1. 26. 27.

But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and the weake things of the world to confound the mighty, &c. that the whole worke, and the glory thereof, may be attributed to him alone.

This should instruct us to go out of our selves, and to looke beyond sense and reason, when we are to meddle with the things of God: not to thinke we are of capacitie sufficient to conceive the mysteries of salvation, but to call upon the Lord for assistance. *Vse* 1.

Neither let us rest upon the act done in hearing of the Word, or receiving the Sacrament, as if thereby grace must needs be conveyed unto us: for we may partake of those ordinances of God to our greater ruine; as *Judas* and *Simon Magus* did. 2

Further, let us be admonished hence not to depend upon the excellency of the Minister: for it is God, not man that giveth working to his ordinances. God indeed may heare their prayers, but he himselfe doth the whole worke. *Moses* was a rare Minister, yet he could not give grace unto the Israelites, but many of them perished that received the Sacrament. *John Baptist* also was a rare Minister, yet he could onely baptize with water: Christ must baptize with the holy Ghost, and with fire. 3 1 Cor. 10. 5.

On the other side, doth the vertue of the ordinances depend on God? then let us not be discouraged in regard of the weaknesse of the Minister, or the outward meanes: for though neither the party administring, nor the things administred can breake our hearts, and worke grace therein, yet the Lord can, and will do it: therefore let us not thinke the worse of that precious jewell, because it is brought by a simple messenger, so 4

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in a plaine boxe, as it were: neither let us lightly esteeme of pure gold, because it is carried in a leather ne bagge, but let us value the gift according to the worth of it, and according to the dignity of the giver.

If men should judge according to corrupt reason, they would never thinke that a poore man by speaking unto them, by powring a little water upon them, and by giving them a little quantitie of Bread and Wine, should make them kings and fellow-heires with Christ Iesus for ever: but if in this gift we looke unto the *Sonne of man, whom God the Father hath sealed* and ordained for that purpose, and cast the eye of our faith upon the promises that are made through him, and the all-sufficient power that is in him, we shal easily conceive that all this may be well effected: for he is a rich fountaine, *Of whose fulnesse we all receive*. What though our capacitie be slender? Gods word giveth wisedome to the simple. What though our hearts be hard? God is able and ready to soften them. What though we have played the hypocrites? so had these here, unto whom our Saviour directeth this exhortation. They pretended to seeke for the bread of life, when their comming was onely to have their bellies filled: yet Christ doth not cast them off, but biddeth them *labour for the food that endureth to eternall life*: and then promiseth to give them eternall life. And so will he deale with us, albeit we have beene dissemblers: yet if now we returne from our hollownesse to soundnesse, and from our hypocrisie to plainnesse, we shall be sure of a blessing.

Psal. 10. 7.
Ezek. 36. 16.

Vse 5. This is further for the great consolation of all Gods faithfull servants. Is the vertue and effectuall working of the Word and Sacrament, the gift of Christ by the appointment of the Father, through the grace of the holy Ghost? then certainly they are highly in Gods favour on whom this is bestowed. If once we have any testimony of grace, the Lord hath greatly magnified his love towards us; according to that speech uttered by *Wisedomes* own mouth; *Blessed is the man that findeth me, he shall receive life and favour from the Lord*: and therefore (as Christ telleth the woman of *Samaria*) if we knew who it is that offereth such mercy, and what the gift of God is, we would esteeme it more highly, and seeke it more earnestly

than

than ordinarily we do. The *Manna* that they had in the wilderneſſe was counted excellent food, and they extraordinarily graced and favoured that did eate thereof; becauſe Angels were the Miniſters of it: how excellent then is this heavenly *Manna*, which is by Chriſts owne hand conveyed unto us: and made effectuall for our good and comfort? Surely we can never be joyfull and thankfull enough for this ineſtimable treaſure.

THE

THE NINTH SERMON.

MAR. 14. 18, 19, 20, 21.

18 *And as they sat at table, and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me, which eateth with me.*

19 *Then they began to be sorrowfull; and to say to him, one by one, Is it I? and another, Is it I?*

20 *And he answered, and said unto them, It is one of the twelve that dippeth with me in the platter.*

21 *Truly the Sonne of man goeth his way, as it is written of him, but woe be to that man by whom the Sonne of man is betraied: it had beene good for that man if he had never beene borne.*

THis Historie containeth in it especially & principally the Institution of the Lords Supper: wherin two things are chiefly to be observed:

1. A conference that was before it, contained in these foure verses.
2. The manner and celebration of it, contained in the three next verses.

Verse 18. First, for the conference, it was betweene our Saviour and his disciples, at the eating of the *Passover*, before the institution of the other Sacrament: wherein 1. Christ Iesus doth discover unto them the practise and treason that was conspired against him; Iesus said, *Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me*, &c. that is, shal treacherously deliver me into the hands of the high Priests.

Verse 19. 2. They make answer: where the affection wherewith the eleven delivered the same, is expressed: *Then they began to be sorrowfull, and to say to him, one by one, Is it I? and another, Is it I?*

Sorrowfull they were, because their Master had told them that he shold be betraied into the hands of sinners, & that one of

of them should do it, and every one was doubtfull & distrustfull of himselfe, and therefore partly that they might be better acquainted with their owne hearts, to the intent that if they were of such an ill disposition, they might be helped against it: partly that each of them might have comfort that he was not the man: and partly that they might be cleared every one of them before his fellows, they aske our Saviour, saying, *Is it I?* *Judas* indeed proposeth the same question, but not with the like affection, nor to the like use and purpose, but onely that he might thereby cloake his unfaithfull and ungodly plots and practises against his Master, having before this compounded with the high Priests for the betraying of him.

Next is set downe the reply of our Saviour upon this their answer: wherein he declareth,

§ 1 The grievousnesse of the treason.
§ 2 The miserable estate of the treatour.

First, the grievousnesse of the treason is set forth, *Verse* 20. in that it was contrived by (one of the twelve) one whom Christ had chosen to be an Apostle, and principall Ambassadour unto himselfe: one that was so familiar with him, as that he did sit at his owne Table, eate of his owne messe, yea in his owne dish: *It is one of the twelve* (saith Christ) *that dippeth with me in the platter.*

Secondly, the wretched condition of the traitour is declared, *Ver.* 21. (*Truly the Sonne of man goeth, &c.*] Where the Lord Christ Iesus preventeth some objections that might arise in their hearts: for thus they might reason in themselves. Do you know of such a treason? and who it is that goes about it? Why then will you yeeld your selfe into his hands? were it not good wisedome to prevent it, and to use means to escape? No (saith our Saviour) that may not be (*The Sonne of man goeth his way, as it is written of him*) I cannot, I must not avoid it, nor decline from it: for the Lord hath appointed it, yea manifested it in his word, which cannot be verified, unlesse this be fulfilled: therfore seeing the Lord in his wisedome hath made this to be my way, I will be content to walke in it. Vpon this they might reply againe: If the Sonne of man go away, as it is written of him, then he that doth betray him effecteth no more

Verse 21.

more than that which the word of God hath foretold of him: which may ſeeme to be no fault, and therefore to deſerve no puniſhment. Yes (ſaith Chriſt) *Woe to that man by whom the Sonne of man is betrayed*, &c. It was pre-ordained indeed, but that doth not leſſen the fault, neither ſhall it diminiſh the puniſhment of him that is the traytour: but *woe unto him, it had beene good for that man he had never beene borne*, whatſoever matters of preſent contentment he may ſeeme to enjoy.

Verſe 8. *And as they ſate at table, and did eate, Jeſus ſaid, Verily I ſay unto you*, &c.

Doct. 1. Chriſt knew before what he ſhould ſuffer.

The Lord Ieſus Chriſt was well acquainted beforehand with all the paſſions which he was to indure, and all the occurrents that ſhould befall him: as may plainly be ſeene in this place, and elſewhere, in that he foretelleth his diſciples by whoſe means he ſhould dye, and after what manner he ſhould die, with all other circumſtances. As one Evangeliſt teſtifieth, ſaying, *From that time forth, Jeſus began to ſhew unto his diſciples, that he muſt go to Jeruſalem, and ſuffer many things of the Elders, and of the high Prieſts, and Scribes, and be ſlaine, and riſe againe the third day.* Matth. 16. 21. And as another witneſſeth, relating our Saviour his owne words; *As Moſes lift up the Serpent in the wilderneſſe, ſo muſt the Sonne of man be lift up.* Ioh. 3. 14.

Reaſon.

1 First, becauſe he was God from everlaſting, and ſo knew all, his hand diſpoſing of every particular thing that in the fulneſſe of time came to paſſe, being pre-ordained by his owne wiſedome and counſell. Acts 4. 28.

2 Secondly, he as Mediator muſt of neceſſitie underſtand of all things before: becauſe he compounded with his Father for our redemption, not raſhly without fore-knowledge of that which he ſhould performe, but adviſedly, agreeing how much he ſhould endure, and what he ſhould pay; even ſo much as ſhould ſatisfie his Fathers juſtice, and appeaſe his wrath.

3 Thirdly, the Scripture foretold what he was to undergo: that one that was neere him ſhould betray him, who was prefigured in the perſon of *Achitophel*; that he ſhould ſuffer a very grievous kind of death, ſuch as was long before deſcribed, with the particular circumſtances that accompanied it, both in

Pſalme

Psalme 21. and *Esay* 53. besides sundry other places. Now he was perfectly acquainted with all the Scriptures, and the meaning thereof, they being written by his own Spirit, and therefore it must necessarily follow, that none of his sufferings therin prefigured and foretold, could be hidden from him; and as he foresaw what should befall his naturall body, so hath hee a continuall foresight of that which shall befall his mysticall body, that is, his people, and every one of them.

The doctrine serveth, first for consolation against all tribulations that man light upon us, & all persecutions that may be raised against us, either by bloudy Papists, or other enemies of the Gospell. When we see them exceeding malitious in their plots, and threatnings, and practises, intending and indevouring to overthrow al the servants & services of God, & to raze them by the very foundations, and not to suffer one of them to live, but (if it were possible) to root out their names from under heaven; though, I say, their rage bee marvellous great, even as the rage of the Sea, yet need we not at all to bee afraid of them: for the Lord Christ knoweth all that shall befall us, as he did all that should betide himselfe: for the case of his people is as much respected of him, as was the state of his owne body, since he tooke upon him an humane nature, and suffered both in soule & body for their redemption and happinesse. Therefore is it that our adversaries attempt many things against us, which never come to passe (as it fared with *Ieremy* in the times of old) because God foreseeth them, and disappointeth them. *Vse* 1. Ier. 11. 18.

But suppose some things doe come to passe according to their hearts desire, the Lord knew of them before, and therefore did not prevent them, because hee saw they could not be hurtfull unto us: Hee is a wise Father, that will have his children to feele somewhat that may bee for their smart and paine, as knowing it will turne to their good at length, but hee will stay any thing that might procure their undoing and overthrow, and therefore Christ pronounceth them happy and blessed that suffer for his names sake, either disgraces, or losse of goods, or banishment, or imprisonment, or death it selfe. As farre then as any of these may hinder Mat. 5.

our happineſſe, we ſhall be ſure to be freed from them, ſo that we need not *feare any of the things which we ſhall ſuffer*: for if we be *faithfull unto the death, we ſhall receive the crown of life*.

Revel 2.

Vſe 2. Secondly, this ſerves for terrour unto wicked men, in that Gods remembrance is equall to his fore-knowledge: and therfore if he can understand long before what they ſhall do, he can as well call to remembrance what they have done: and ſithence he hath an eternall fore-ſight of what ſhall come to paſſe, he hath alſo an everlaſting memory to keepe a memorial of the things that are practiſed againſt him & his, to ſet them in order before the offenders at the laſt day, and to inflict proportionable puniſhment upon every one of them, according to the ſame.

Verſ. 19. *Then they began to be ſorrowfull, and to ſay to him one by one, Is it I? &c.*

Doct. 2. Here we ſee that every one of the Diſciples (except *Iuda*) was miſtruſtfull of himſelfe, and yet none of them proved to be the Traytor. Whence we may learne, that

Feare of ſinne prevents falling into ſinne.

They are likely to fall into leaſt evill, who are moſt fearfull of falling into the ſame.

They who are moſt jealous of their owne corruptions, are beſt fortified againſt dangerous falles. Therefore is it ſaid by the wiſe man: *Bleſſed is he that feareth alwaies: but he that hardeneth his hart ſhall fall into miſchiefe.* That was *Haſaels* caſe, he ſuſpected not himſelfe, and therfore when the Prophet told him that he ſhould be a cruell man, that hee ſhould ſlay the young men of Iſrael with the ſword, and daſh their infants againſt the ſtones, and rend in pieces their women with child: he ſaid unto the Prophet, What? *Is thy ſervant a dog, that I ſhould doe this great thing?* As if he had ſaid, I were worſe than a dogge, if I ſhould ever ſhew ſuch immanity and fierceneſſe, and ſuch beaſtly violence, but the Prophets words fell out to be true: he would not miſtruſt his owne heart, and therfore hee became ſavage as a Wolfe, and fierce as a Lyon. The example of *Dauid* wil adde further light unto this point: for as long as he was awed by Gods correcting hand, & fearing himſelfe, kept a narrow watch over al his waies, he ſtood firme & unmoveable againſt all aſſaults: but when hee grew feareleſſe

Pro. 28. 14.

2 King. 8. 12. 13

and

and careleſſe, we know what a grievous & dangerous fall he had. So *Peter* and the reſt of the Apoſtles as long as they were afraid of themſelves (as concerning this matter of treaſon they were) none of them fell; but when he and the reſt grew confident of their owne ſtrength, then they all plaid the cowards, eſpecially *Peter* that was moſt reſolute in an opinion of himſelfe. For whereas he profeſſed that whatſoever his Maſter thought of him, he would never forſake him; Chriſt muſt be content for once to be miſtaken and deceived in him, hee was another manner of man then hee conceived him to bee: whereas (I ſay) he was thus preſumptuous of his own courage in holding out, he that boaſted he would ſtād it out even unto death, was daunted with a word; and wheras hee thought if the men of warre had come againſt him with ſwords, hee ſhould have defied them all, & ſtucke unto his maſter: a poore ſilly wench with the only breath of her lips, maketh him lye and ſweare, and forſweare his Saviour. So that from theſe examples it is evident, that when men are doubtful and diſtruſtfull of themſelves, then they ſpeed well; but when they are confident of themſelves, then they ſlip and ſlide, & fall exceeding dangerouſly. And this may be yet further confirmed unto us by reaſons: for

Firſt, he that is fearefull of himſelfe, hath God to bee his keeper, who pronounceth him *bleſſed that feareth alwaies*: for this holy feare will ſtirre men up to make many earneſt and fervent requeſts unto the Lord for his ſtrength and gracious aſſiſtance, which he never denyeth unto thoſe that faithfully crave it at his hands; and thence it comes to paſſe, that how weake ſoever they be in themſelves, yet they grow ſtrong in him, and in the power of his might. *Reaſon* 1. Prou. 28. 14.

Secondly, as they have God to keep them, ſo will they with all diligence keepe their owne hearts, and avoid all occaſions and allurements unto evill. As one that is afraid of the peſtilence, will be very carefull to avoid the infection, and for that end carry wormewood, &c. in his hand, and take ſome what next his ſtomacke, that may fence him againſt it, if hee be to walk abroad, taking heed what company he comes into, and how he paſſeth through any ſtreet, or by any dore where ſick- Ephes. 6. 2.

ſickneſſe is hot: whereas on the contrary, he that thinketh it not to be infectious, cares not what company he converſeth with, nor what places he commeth unto, but if he expect a booty, will goe to their beds ſide that are ſicke of it, & receive plague ſtuffe, or plaguie garments or the like. So is it for ſinne, he that ſeeth the poyſon and infection of it, will eſchew all company, intiſements, and occaſions that may draw him into it: but as for thoſe who ſee not, or feare not the proneneſſe of their nature to fall into iniquity, nor the dangerouſnes therof when they are plunged in it, they are altogether negligent in looking to their hearts, & to their behaviour, entertaining impure luſts in their ſouls, not caring whither they caſt their eys, nor what ſinfull objects they meet withall for the poyſoning and corrupting of their affections. Whence it oftentimes commeth to paſſe, that they are very ſhamefully overtaken: for when they waxe ſo bold and ventrous, it is juſt with God to give them over unto themſelves, yea though they be his owne children. As he dealt with *David* when his hart was lifted up, and he preſumed that his mountaine was ſo ſtrong, that hee ſhould never be moved, when he gave himſelfe to his eaſe, and tooke liberty for his eye, as if there had not been in him an inclination to adultery, we reade what great ſinnes and miſeries he fel into: how much more then wil the Lords hand be upon the ungodly ones of the world, that do altogether harden their hearts from his feare, never eſchewing the baits of ſinne, nor the ſnares wherein Sathan ſeeketh to take them, and to hold them faſt, unto their eternall damnation?

Pſal. 30. 6. 7.
2 Sam. 1. 1. 2.

Vſe 1. Seeing it is ſo, that as every one is more fearefull of falling, (provided that his feare be a godly feare, and doe not drive him to deſpaire, or to diſcouragement,) ſo he is in leſſe danger of falling; therefore whatſoever ſinne the Scriptures tell us that God doth abhor, and man is ſubject to fall into, we ſhould conclude, that we are likely to be overtaken with the ſame, & in that regard ſtirre up our hearts to a holy feare and ſuſpition of our owne weakeneſſe, intreating the Lord to preſerve us from them; yea though they be monſtrous and ſo unnaturall evils, ſuch as are mentioned in the firſt Chapter of the Epiſtle to the *Romanes*, and 2 *Tim.* 3. 2. let us be jealous of our ſelves,

leſt

leſt we ſhould be drawne unto them.

For reproofe of them that are bold and venterous, to be in dangerous places with ſuſpected perſons, they will warrant you for ever being inſnared; but let them know that none are more likely to be overtaken by idolatry, adultery, or any ſuch foule ſinnes, than they are. *Vſe 2.*

Verſe 20. *It is one of the twelve that dippeth, &c.*

Doct. No bands of kindneſſe can make wicked men faithful unto godly men. *Doct. 3.* No naturall or civill band will hold where mens hearts are not linked by Chriſtianity

That which is here related to have fallen out betweene Chriſt and *Iudas*, will hold true betwixt all Chriſtians and *Iudas* his fellowes, that though they be never ſo well dealt with, and never ſo courteouſly uſed, yet they will prove unfaithfull, and requite evill for good, if it may be for their advantage.

Chriſt Ieſus (as we may obſerve) had dealt marvellous friendly with *Iudas*: he had admitted him to his ſervice, to be domeſticall, to be one of his Apoſtles (which was ſo great an office in the Church as never man had greater) to ſit at his owne Table, to eate of his owne meſſe, at ſo holy a banquet as was the bleſſed Sacrament, &c. yet after all this he moſt lewdly and baſely for a little money betrayeth & deliver eth him into the hands of his mortall adverſaries. This (as all muſt needes acknowledge) was exceeding great unfaithfulneſſe, and very wretched dealing: yet none other than is ſtill to bee expected from men of *Iudas* his ſpirit and diſpoſition. This *David* complaineth of, and exclaimeth againſt in *Achitophel*, the figure of *Iudas*: *My familiar friend* (ſaith he) *whom I truſted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up the heele againſt me.* He had highly preferred *Achitophel*, made him of his Councel, yea the principal man of his councel; he uſed him as his familiar friend, not only in matters of ſtate, bnt in matters of religion, &c. Yet for all this, he fell from him in hope of greater promotion, joyned with his rebellious ſon *Abſalon*, ſought to depoſe him from his kingnome, yea to deprive him of his very life: *He lifted up the heele againſt me* (ſaith that good King) comparing him unto cattel that are fat fed, who feeling the provender to prick the, do kicke with their heeles againſt their maſter. The like ſinfull Pſal 41. 9.

and unthankfull dealing may be ſeene in *Ioaſh*. *Iehoiada* the
2 Chro. 23. high Prieſt had preſerved his life, by keeping him cloſe from his grandmother *Athaliah*, who had ſlain all his brethren: and this he did not without perill to himſelfe: afterwards he cau-
2 Chro 24.20, 21.22. ſed *Athaliahs* life to be taken from her, and the crowne and kingdome to be eſtabliſhed unto him: yet notwithſtanding all this kindneſſe, when he fell from God & from religion, he forgot *Iehoiada*, and cruelly murthered his ſon *Zechariah*, an holy Prophet of God, for doing the meſſage of the Lord unto him, in reproving him and his Princes for their idolatry.

To this point our Saviour giveth further teſtimony, telling his Diſciples what ſhould fall out upon the preaching of the
Mat. 10.21. Goſpell: *The brother ſhall betray the brother to death, & the father the ſon, and the children ſhall riſe againſt their parents, and ſhal cauſe them to die.* What neerer bonds than theſe, eſpecially that of children to their parents, who have beene the meanes of their life, of their education, and in a word, of all the good things that they either doe or ſhall enjoy, and that not without great paines and charges, and troubles unto themſelves? yet for all this, if children be impious, and their parents religious, they will not ſticke to betray them, and to put them to death. So that by theſe proofes it is cleere and evident, that no bands of kindneſſe or of nature will hold, where the bands of religion are wanting. And there is reaſon for it: for

Reaſons.
1 Firſt, the divell hath the diſpoſing of all ungodly mens hearts, and therefore untill ſuch time as he grow kinde unto Gods children, nothing in the world (but Gods over-ruling hand) can make his limbs, true and truſtie friends unto the members of Chriſt: for Sathan having the command of them, will inforce them (will they, nill they) to be unkinde, unthankfull, and uncourteous unto Gods ſervants that have beene moſt beneficiall unto them.

2 Secondly, there is in all unregenerate men abundance of pride, which maketh them to thinke that whatſoever is done for them, either by God or men, it is due debt, and nothing more than their deſerts doe require: and therefore when they are fat and full, they ſpurne with the heele againſt the givers. And this let us ſet downe for a certaine ground, that they

which

which shew themselves unfaithfull and disloyall unto God notwithstanding all his benefits, will never be true and firme friends unto us, how neerely and strongly soever they are linked unto us in outward respects: he that is not Gods friend can never be our faithfull friend.

Thirdly, wicked men doe love sinne better than any benefit: and therefore will they fall out with their kindest friends rather than with their beloved corruptions, and be discourteous unto any, yea adventure the damning of their owne soules eternally, rather than crosse their wretched lusts, and set themselves against their sinfull actions. 3

For instruction, to teach us a point of wisedome, that seeing all sinners are unfaithfull, therefore wee should beware how we trust them, and how we commit our selves or our secrets unto them: for albeit their lookes be faire and smooth, and their speeches and outward carriage seeme loving and kinde, yet they feare not God, they will lye in wait for an advantage, and do us a mischiefe before we be aware, if we take not the better heed of them, and therfore let us not expose our selves unto them. *Vse* 1.

Indeed our Saviour did lay open himself unto *Judas*, because he knew that *Judas* was appointed for that work, and the wil of his Father must needs be fulfilled: but wee not having the like reason, must not imitate our Saviour herein, nor acquaint such persons with our counsels: much lesse let vs provoke them, and cast our selves into their danger: for if they have us once in the snare, there is no hope of mercy, except the Lord worke for us extraordinarily.

Let men therefore looke heedfully unto themselves, & beware, as of others, so of untrusty servants, of ungodly children, yea of unholy yoke-fellowes: for there is no fidelitie to be expected where the true feare of God is not planted in the heart. They are bound to pray for them, to instruct them, and shew them any kindnesse that civility or Christianity bindeth them to performe: but herein their wisedome must appeare, that they be not too open hearted unto them, nor too readie to put them in trust in matters of great importance.

Secondly, here is matter of comfort to all such as are faith- *Vse* 2.

full in their dealings, that would rather lay downe their lives, than deale dishonestly or discourteously: this is a great grace of God to requite friendship to their friends, & to shew themselves thankefull for benefits received. And indeed true and sound thankefulnesse can be in none, but onely in those that are truely gracious: wicked men may be glad of a ḡood turne, and in outward complement of words and behaviour make a semblance and shew of thankfulnesse: but to be truely joyfull, as seeing Gods hand in a kindnesse received, and heartily & in conscience to love the partie whom God hath made an instrument of that good, with a desire and endevour to requite the same, this cannot possibly be in any, but in Gods people.

Verse 21. *Truely the Sonne of man goeth his way as it is written of him, but woe be to that man by whom the Sonne of man is betrayed.*

The death of Christ and the manner and meanes of it were prophecied of before, yet is not *Iudas* thereby excused. Which teacheth us, that,

Doct. 4. The wicked fulfill Gods will to their ruine.

A wicked man may fulfill the will of God to his own condemnation, and doe that which God hath foretold, to his utter destruction.

God had said, that *Iudas* should be a traytor: he is a traytor: God had determined (and Christ had confirmed it) that he should be a divell: he is such a one, yet all to his woe. So was it declared before unto *Abrahã*, that *Pharaoh* should grievously afflict the *Israelites*: he did accomplish Gods will in that behalfe, and verified that which God had forespoken, but to his own utter ruine. In like sort the Prophet *Nathan* in Gods name denoũced beforehand this judgmẽt against *David*, that he would raise up evill against him out of his own house: *Absalon* effected it accordingly, but to his own overthrow. So *Herod* and *Pontius Pilat*, the high Priests and the Gentiles consulted together to put to death the holy Sonne of God, and therein did nothing more than Gods *hand & his counsell had determined before to be done*, yet notwithstãding they perished in their sins as many of them as repented not. And to heape together no more proofes in a matter so evident, we may note in the Scriptures how the enemies of the Church are compa-

2 Sam. 12. 11.

Act. 4. 27. 28.

red

red to Gold-smiths, for that they purged Gods people from their drosse, and to Launders, because they washed away their spots, &c. and yet heavy judgements are denounced, and have beene from time to time executed upon them for such works: And good reason it should be so. Dan. 11. 35. Zach. 13. 9.

First, because they are not allured unto it by vertue of any commandement, but driven unto it by a secret providence of God. *Reasons.* 1

Secondly, they do it not in love unto God, but in malice against God, or man, or both: as *Judas* in a spleene conspired against his Master, because he found fault with his hypocriticall dealing. *Mar.* 14. 6. &c. and 10. &c. 2

Thirdly, they ayme not at Gods honour, though they accomplished that which tendeth to his honour: but they seeke themselves some way or other, in that which they do. 3

Which serveth for the just reproofe and terror of those that when they are convicted of any hainous crime, cast off all the fault with this, I was predestinated unto it, and unlesse God hath appointed it, I could never have done it. What of that? therefore they hope there is no danger hanging over their head for their facts But what then will they say of *Judas*? did not he do that which God had decreed? yet our Saviour saith, *Woe to him:* and we may as well say, wo unto these: for whatsoever they imagine, the necessitie of their sinning in respect of Gods decree, doth nothing diminish the grievousnesse of their offence, neither shall it at all mitigate the extremitie of their punishment. *Use* 1.

This is also for our instruction, that we should frame our obedience in another manner, and for that purpose reason thus with our selves: have I a commandment for this which I do? is it a duty warranted by the Word, which I now performe? Some do that which God hath appointed, but it is onely by a providence, not in any conscience: how doth my obedience differ from theirs? Do I practise good duties because God calleth for them? then shall my service be acceptable unto God: do I forbeare evill because he forbiddeth it? then do I that which is pleasing unto him, otherwise not. In this manner let us sift our hearts, performing every thing in due manner, *Use* 2. 1 2

manner, and to that end which God hath ordained, that we may not onely do that which the Scripture saith (for so did *Judas*) but that which the Scripture warranteth, and in that sort as it approveth, for so Gods servants are bound to do.

It had beene good for that man, if he had never beene borne.

It is good for us that he was borne, because we have benefit thereby: but not for him, because whatsoever matter of contentment he had in his life time, turned at length to the increase of his misery, and to his perpetuall damnation. Whereby it appeareth, that

Doct. 5. No earthly contentment can countervaile the punishments in hell. Iob 2.4.

All the delights and contentments of wicked men in this world, cannot countervaile the miseries that they shall feele in the world to come.

Judas had life it selfe, which is a thing very delightfull, and of which it is truly said, though by a lying spirit, *Skinne for skinne, and all that ever a man hath, he will give for his life:* He had also great preferment, being one of the Apostles, and the chiefe officer amongst them, namely, to be their purse-bearer; which liked him exceeding well, because he was a thiefe, and stole from them much of that which was given: yet notwithstanding all this, and whatsoever else can be named, our Saviour saith, it had been good for him that he had never bin born.

The like may be said of *Saul*, *Jeroboam*, *Ahab*, and many other kings: who would account it a good bargaine to have their kingdomes with all the honors and delights which they could afford: and their victories with all the glory that accompanieth the same, upon this condition, that he shall endure the same miseries and torments in hell, that they do? Certainly no wise man would willingly make such a match: for *what shall it profit a man to winne the whole world, and to lose his owne soule?*

Reasons. 1

First, the best delights and contentments of this life are mixed with many troubles, sorrows, and feares: but their miseries in the life to come are pure miseries, without any mitigation or comfort in their paine and torment.

2

Secondly, their pleasures here are few, and short, and of small continuance: but their paines hereafter shall be innumerable and endlesse.

Third-

Thirdly, all their delights in this life, are but ſnares, and all their good cheere and dainties, but poyſons, and the more men take of them, the more grievous ſhall their puniſhment in hell be. 3 Rev. 18. 7.

For inſtruction, that we ſhould not endanger our ſoules for the enjoyment of the pleaſures of ſinne for a ſeaſon; yet many are ſo fooliſh, that ſo they might ſatisfie their fleſhly deſires, they care not though they do it with the price of their ſoules: ſo they may have their pleaſures and commodities, and fulfill their beaſtly luſts, they will even ſell themſelves unto deſtruction, as *Ahab* did: not caring what miſeries they caſt themſelves into, nor what ſnares they intangle themſelves in, ſo they may accompliſh their brutiſh and divelliſh purpoſes, being therein more ſilly than the poore bird or fiſh, that once perceiving the ſnare or the hooke, will not eaſily meddle, nor adventure the danger of the ſecond time. *Vſe 1.*

Secondly, if it be ſo, that all the commodities and delights of this life cannot countervaile the miſeries of damnation, then on the other ſide why ſhould it not hold as true for our comfort, that all the loſſes and ſorrows of this life cannot countervaile the happineſſe of ſalvation: for the Apoſtle ſaith, *That the afflictions of this preſent time, are not worthy of the glory that ſhall be ſhewed unto us*: the one being light and momentany, the other weighty and eternall. Let us ſuffer never ſo many diſgraces and loſſes, & go through never ſo many hard brunts, our bleſſed eſtate in heaven will anſwer for all: ſo that as it was ſaid of *Judas*, it had beene good for him he had never bin borne, notwithſtanding all the delights that he enjoyed; ſo may it as truly be ſaid, happy we that ever we were borne, notwithſtanding all the miſeries that we have endured: yea, though they have beene as great as theirs, of whom mention is made, *Hebr.* 11. that they are racked, and ſtoned, and hewne in ſunder, &c. for they endure all in hope of a better reſurrection, *Verſ.* 35. and ſo ſhould we if God bring us unto the like extremities. And thus much of the conference, now followeth the inſtitution of the LORDS Supper. *Vſe 2.* Rom. 8. 18.

THE TENTH SERMON.

MAR. 14. 22, 23, 24.

22 *And as they did eate, Jesus tooke the bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to them, and said, Take eate, this is my body.*

23 *Also he tooke the cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all dranke of it.*

24 *And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new Testament, which is shed for many.*

WE have in this Text and the words following, declared unto us, after what manner our Saviour did celebrate his own Supper, at the first institution thereof, leaving to us & his whole Church, a president and patterne for the due observation of it, wherein is to be noted;

§ 1 The dealing of our Saviour with the Elements,

§ 2 His speaking to the Communicants.

1. Concerning the first, it is said of the bread *that he* 1. *took it, and* 2. *blessed it, and* 3. *brake it, and* 4. *gave it.* (*He tooke the bread*) meaning that bread which was prepared by them for the Passeover, and by Gods providence for the Sacrament. And *when he had blessed it*: that is, prayed for a blessing upon it, that it might be effectuall, both to his elect Apostles that were present, and to all those that should faithfully receive it, to the end of the world: and had also praised God, for giving himselfe to be the Redeemer and Saviour of the world, & vouchsafing unto his Church this Sacrament, and causing the bread to be of such great force and use, as not onely to represent unto them his sufferings, but also to confirme their faith in him, and to exhibite the vertue of his passion unto them. Having

thus

thus blessed it, it is said that (*he brake it*) which he did in a double respect; one was, that so it might be more divisible, to every one a parte: another was, that it might be more significant, to expresse Christs sufferings. Concerning whom though it be said, that a *bone of him should not be broken*: yet that phrase is used to declare the passion of the whole manhood, *that he was broken for our iniquities*, *Isa* 53.5. When he had broken it, it is added, that he (*gave it*) assuring them thereby, that he bestowed himselfe upon them.

Likewise for the cup it is said, *He tooke it, and when he had blessed it*, that is, prayed and praised God for it, in the same sort as he had done for the bread, *he gave it to them*, *Ver.* 24.

2. Now concerning this speech to the Communicants, it consisteth partly in a { Commandement. / Promise.

1 The Commandment is contained in these words, *Take, eate*, take the bread, and take my body: eate the bread, and eate my body: take and eat the bread corporally and by sense; take eate Christ spiritually, and by faith. And the like commandement is here implyed, and elsewhere expressed concerning the cup, that is, the wine in the cup, (drinke ye all of this) which they are said here to obey. *Verse* 22.

2 The promise is implyed in these words, *This is my body, this is my blood*; that is, lively signes to signifie, and effectuall instruments to convey my selfe, and all the benefits of my death and passion unto you. Mat. 26.27.

Further, concerning the wine it is said, *This is my blood of the New Testament*, or new Covenant: as if he should have said, as God hath bequeathed unto you himselfe, his graces, his blessings and his kingdome, so by the shedding of my blood he will confirme this legacy unto you, and that two wayes:

First, because as others, so this Will and Testament could be of no force as long as the maker thereof was alive, *Heb.* 9. 16, 17. Therefore by this Sacrament Christ would have them put in minde of his death.

Secondly, as in other, so in this Will, it was not sufficient

the party that made it ſhould be dead, but it muſt be proved by authority, as it were to be good, and therefore was this authenticall ſeale of the Sacrament ſet unto it. So that this Teſtament was ſealed by the bloud of Chriſt, concerning the merit and efficacie of it: but by the Sacrament, concerning the application of it.

It is called the new Teſtament or Covenant; in reſpect of that which was under the Law, from which it differeth, and goeth beyond it in divers circumſtances: as particularly ſhall be ſhewed.

And as they did eate, Jeſus tooke the bread, and when he had given thanks, &c. Or as the word ſignified (*bleſſed*) that is prayed unto his Father for a bleſſing to be beſtowed upon the receiving of it, not onely upon thoſe that were then preſent, but upon all that ſhould afterwards to the end of the world faithfully partake of the ſame. In that Chriſt Ieſus ſeekes the bleſſing of this Ordinance from the Lord, the Doctrine is that

The vertue and efficacy of the Sacrament, is from Gods owne hand, through the mediation of Chriſt Ieſus.

Doct. 1. The vertue of the Sacrament is from Gods owne hand. See the Sermon on Ieh. 6.

God gives it, and Chriſt procures the benefit of it unto his people: and this is common to all other ordinances and ſervices with the Sacrament. To this purpoſe it is ſaid, that *Moſes* gave not that *Manna* unto the Iſraelites in the wildernes from heaven, but *my father* (ſaith Chriſt) *giveth you the true bread, which giveth life unto the world:* that, no Miniſter, nor creature in heaven or earth can beſtow upon any.

Doct. 5. Ieh 6.31.

Reaſon 1. Iam 1.17.

Firſt, one generall reaſon of this doctrine is, that *every good giving, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh downe from the Father of lights.* Now what more excellent and perfect gift can there be than the body and bloud of Ieſus Chriſt? and therefore if God be the author and giver of all other good things, this muſt of neceſſitie proceed from his bountie in a ſpeciall manner.

A ſecond cauſe why God will have the diſpoſing of his graces in his owne hand, is, that there might be a difference betweene him and all his Miniſters, and that he might retaine that prerogative for Chriſt Ieſus alone: for he it is that *giveth*

the

the meat which endureth to everlasting life. And the reason is because *the Father hath sealed him*, that is, the Lord hath authorized him by the broad seale of heaven, and will let none to be copartners with him in that office: he is the Lord-Treasurer of all graces, and therefore he must blesse his ordinances unto us, if ever we looke for benefit thereby. In which regard *John Baptist* saith, *I baptize you with water*, and that is all that he could do; as for washing of the heart, and purging of the conscience, that he attributeth wholly unto Christ Iesus: *He will baptize you with the holy Ghost, and with fire.* Mat. 3. 11. *John* would not arrogate that unto himselfe, lest he should treacherously lay claime to that which is proper unto the crowne. The like faithfulnesse in giving God his due, we see in the Apostle *Paul*, who saith, *I have planted, Apollos watered, but God giveth the increase*: 1 Cor. 3. 6. thereby intimating that the best Ministers are but as Gardeners in the Lords Church, they can but put the Siens into the stocke, or the root into the ground: and as possible it is for a man to make a tree, as for a Minister to make a Christian: and as possible to put sap into a dead blocke, and to make it grow and flourish, and bring forth fruit in abundance, as for a Minister to put into any the least drop of grace, or to adde any whit unto it where it is already wrought.

Thirdly, the Lord will have the vertue of the Sacrament to be in his own power, to bestow where and how he will, that there might be a difference betweene Communicants, to wit, betweene the good and the bad. If it were in mens hands to dispose, and did consist in the deed done, as ignorant Papists imagine, men would bestow it promiscuously, and wicked hypocrites would have as good a share as those that are truly religious, and the worst speed as well as the best: for men cannot search the hearts of their people, to see with what preparation they come: and there is that love in them (which is a thing commendable) that they desire all might be saved. If *Moses* could have given every man in Israel grace when he gave them the *Manna*, he would have done it: he that could have beene content, that his name should be razed out of the booke of life for their sakes, would not have stucke with them for such a matter. If *Abraham* could have circumcised *Ismael's* heart,

heart, when he circumcised his flesh, he should not have been excommunicated for his prophanesse: but God hath alwayes heretofore, and doth still keepe this power in his owne hand, that so he may enrich with grace those whom he thinketh fittest, and deale with every one as he knoweth their hearts. *Moses* was the Minister of Baptisme to those that passed through the Red-sea, yet with many of them God was not pleased: for onely those that are good in his sight shall taste of his good gifts: And therefore Christ prayeth not for the world, but onely for those which he hath chosen out of the world, and such as shall beleeve through the preaching of the Gospel, that they may be partakers of the benefit of his ordinances.

1 Cor. 10.

Ioh. 17.

Vse 1. First, for instruction, if ever we would speed well when we come to the Sacrament, let us make the Lord our friend, sith the distribution of grace pertaineth to him alone: let us seek it at his hand, and not bring any sinne with us which may offend his glorious presence. Which if we can do, we may and must expect a blessing from him. It is not the goodnesse of the Minister that can do it (though it be a good comfort to have a holy mans prayer for us) it is as possible that a man should appoint where the raine shall fall, as where grace shall fall: and though it should be concluded by Parliament, what dayes it should rain, and in what parts of the land, it were of no force; for God alone hath the ordering of the clouds, and so hath he also of the graces of his Spirit.

Vse 2. Secondly, this maketh for the comfort of such as come prepatedly unto the table of the Lord, with a true heart, though burdened and wearied with many corruptions. Christ hath prayed that the Sacrament may be effectuall unto them, and therefore it shall be so: and he hath praised God for giving it unto his people, and therefore it shall not be in vaine: neither their owne weaknesse, nor the meannesse of the Elements, nor the imperfections of the Minister shall hinder the powerfull working of Gods ordinance.

Objection. But we are bale creatures, and the Minister is no better than he should be.

Answer. Indeed if Grace were to be fetched out of such durty ditches as we are, we could looke for little good; but God is a cleare fountaine,

fountaine, and from his fulneſſe ſhall we receive grace upon grace.

But alas, neither we, nor our Miniſter can pray ſo earneſtly, nor praiſe God ſo heartily, when wee communicate at the Lords Table, as God requires, and we ought to doe. *Objection.*

What of that? were not Chriſts prayers and praiſes ſuch as muſt needs be pleaſing to the Lord? If they were (as cannot be denied) let us never be diſcouraged for theſe imperfections of ours, for Chriſt was appointed to be an univerſall Miniſter for all his elect, and in the perfection of his petitions and thankſgiving, all the blemiſhes that are in ours ſhall be hidden and covered. *Anſwer.*

Thirdly, that is for the reproofe of ſuch prophane perſons, as come uncheerfully and heavily unto this Sacrament: and if the reſpect of their governour, of the lawes, and of their own credit did not move them, they would altogether abſent themſelves from it: theſe are wretched perſons, that make no more account of this ſingular pledge of Gods favour. Hath Chriſt prayed unto his Father for a matter of no worth? and given thanks unto him for that which is of no eſtimation? But let ſuch unbeleeving and ſinful wretches goe: and as for us, let us be aſſured for our comfor, that when Chriſt became a ſuiter to his Father, he was in ſuch favour with him, that he obtained that which was worth the having, and deſerved praiſe and thankſgiving both from him, and from all his people, as that which ſhould be a meanes of their everlaſting happineſſe. *Vſe 3.*

Verſe 22. *Take, eate, this is my body, &c.*

This is the commandement that our Saviour giveth unto the Communicants, to wit, that they ſhould take the bread, and take his body, eate corporally, and eate ſpiritually: receive the ſigne, and the thing ſignified, the one as well as the other: for ſo much doth the promiſe which is annexed, (*This is my body*) imply. As if he ſhould haue ſaid, this bread broken before your eyes, doth plainely repreſent, unto you my body (that is, the whole man-hood, a part being put for the whole) which is given for you, and ſhall be broken for you, that ſo you may have a ſpirituall communion with me, as there is a naturall union betwixt you and this bread which I give unto you:

you: and the like is to be understood of the wine. The words thus expounded, according to the simple meaning thereof, afford us this Doctrine, that

Doct. 2. Our union with Christ by the Sacrament.

Christ Iesus in the Lords Supper, by corporall food doth give us a most sure possession of himselfe, & neer union with himselfe. The bread and wine are not onely pledges of what shall be bestowed on us, but effectuall meanes to exhibite the things promised unto us: and therefore Christ useth these words, *Take eate, this is my body, which is given for you, which is broken for you:* and so of the wine, *Drinke ye all of it, this is my blood which is shed for you.* Now what can be nearer unto us than our meate & drinke? We have greater interest in nothing than in our food; for that is made a part of our selues. If we eate meate in another mans house, after we have received it, it is more ours than his that prepared it; no one joynt is so neere another, nor the soule so neere to the body, as our food is neere us when once it is digested and turned into nourishment unto us: which doth plainly represent unto us the neare conjunction that is betwixt Christ and every worthy receiver: Hence proceedeth that speech of the Apostle, *The cup of blessing which we blesse, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we breake, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?* that is, doe not these cause us to haue an effectuall communion with him in all his gratious merits?

Luk. 22. 19. 1 Cor. 11. 24. Luk. 22. 20.

1 Cor. 10. 16.

Objection.

Now if question should be made, why Christ should make choyse of bread to be a signe in the Sacrament, rather than of any other more excellent and glorious creature?

Answer. Why God made choise of bread.

The answer is, that he did it for divers reasons:

1 Because it was his will, as it is said concerning the Gospell, that *it pleased him by the foolishnesse of preaching to save them that beleeve.*

2 There is besides his pleasure great wisedome in it, because it is very fit to represent that unto us, for which it was ordained, it being substantiall food, and therefore called the staffe of mans life, on which he doth as it were leane, and whereby it is upholden: and besides, this is for every mans stomack, & for every ones state, & may every where be gotten. And yet withall we must know that bread cannot fully expresse

expreſſe the efficacie of the ſpirituall food, Chriſt Ieſus, which we are to feed upon: for bread is earthly, that food is heavenly; bread preſerveth the corporall life, and that but for a time, Chriſt not only preſerveth, but giveth, not a naturall, but a ſupernaturall, not a temporall, but an eternall life.

Thirdly, God made choiſe of bread, in reſpect of his owne glory, that the weaker the meanes are, the ſtronger his hand might appeare to bee. If we had beene to receive gold or gemmes, or precious ſtones, our ſenſes would have beene more wrought on than our hearts, and we ſhould have more regarded the ſigne, than the thing ſignified: the which inconveniences, with other of the like kinde, the Lord by giving us bread hath prevented.

Seeing then that the bread (as alſo the wine) in the Lords Supper is of ſuch excellent force and uſe, as to put us in minde of Chriſts death and bloud-ſhedding, to teſtifie his undoubted, true, and reall preſence to every faithfull Communicant, and to refreſh and feed the ſoules of the worthy receivers unto eternall life, in which regard they do as far ſurmount common bread and wine, as the wax wherwith a pardon or charter, or any other evidence is ſealed, is of more worth than that which is to be ſold in the Tradeſ-mans ſhop: ſeeing (I ſay) that the bread is of ſuch ſingular uſe, this maketh, firſt, for the confutation of the Papiſts, which hold that after the words of conſecration, there remaineth no bread at all, but that it is tranſubſtantiated into the very body of Chriſt. Indeed wee grant that as the bread, ſo Chriſt his body is there offered and received by every faithfull Communicant: but how? not corporally, but ſpiritually: not from the Miniſters hand, but from Gods hand; not by ſenſe, but by faith. And for the further clearing and confirming of this truth, many reaſons might bee brought, but I will produce but onely ſome few. *Vſe 1.*

The firſt is taken from the expreſſe words of the Holy Ghoſt in the Scriptures, who mentioneth bread after the words of conſecration, (ſaying, *(the bread which we breake.)* 1 Cor. 10. 16. and againe, *Hee that eateth this bread,* &c. 1 Cor. 11. 27, 28. 1 Reaſon. againſt Tranſubſtantiation.

A ſecond reaſon is this, we receive the ſame in ſubſtance 2

which

which the Fathers did in the wilderneſſe, 1 *Cor.* 10. 1. for the *Manna* is there called ſpirituall meate, and the rocke is ſaid to be Chriſt: now it is certaine that they did not corporally eate the body, and drinke the bloud of Chriſt, becauſe hee had not then aſſumed our nature: and our Saviour denyeth the
Ioh. 6. 32. *Manna* to be the true bread which came downe from heaven:

3 Thirdly, if the bread by the words of conſecration be tranſubſtantiated, it will follow that wicked Communicants may alſo partake of Chriſt (for *Paul* ſaith, that all, good and bad,
1 Cor. 10. did eate the *ſame ſpirituall meat, &c.* as touching the outward ſigne and element) and ſo cannot afterwards periſh, and bee damned; for that whoſoever *eateth of Chriſt his fleſh, &c. hath*
Ioh. 6. 55. 56. *eternall life*, and he will raiſe him at the laſt day: for he dwelleth in us, and we in him: Now it is certaine that there is no communion betwixt the Lord Ieſus and wicked ſinners, neither are they in the ſtate of ſalvation, neither ſhall they be raiſed up unto glory at the laſt day: and conſequently, they feed not on him, and the Sacramentall ſignes are not tranſubſtantiated unto him.

4 A fourth reaſon is from the end for which the Sacrament was inſtituted by Chriſt, & is continued in his Church. Then his meaning was not according to his humane nature, to converſe with his people on earth after a bodily manner: for though he were preſent with his diſciples at the firſt celebration ſenſibly in his manhood, yet the purpoſe of it for afterwards was to continue a memoriall of him, when the heavens ſhould containe him: therefore (ſaith he) *doe this in remem-*
Acts 3. 21. Luke 22. 19. *brance of me*. Which ſhould be ſuperfluous and needleſſe, if he were continually converſant with his membets every where in the Maſſe, and in the Lords Supper.

5 Fiftly, many foule abſurdities doe inſue upon this groſſe opinion of tranſubſtantiation, for,

1 Abſurdity. Firſt, either one Chriſt in his bodily preſence, muſt be both in Heaven and Earth, and in innumerable places there at one inſtant: or elſe be multiplied, and many Chriſts, and many Saviours, and many redeemers, muſt be diſperſed throughout all the Churches where the Maſſe is offered, or the Sacrament

adminiſtred

administred: and so when the Lord did first celebrate it, there was to be one Christ breaking and distributing, and another Christ broken and given: one Christ to *Peter*, another Christ to *John*, and to every Apostle one.

Secondly, how can cruelty be here avoided? how can men devoure him, and not kill him? how should men swallow him up, and yet offer no violence unto him? 2

A glorious body may be in many places at once, and be eaten and not hurt; because it is not patible nor mortall. *Objection.*

But when the Disciples first received him, he was both mortall (for he died on the morrow) and patible, for he was in an agony and torment that night: and therefore how commeth it to passe that the nailes should have force to kill him, which onely pierced some part of his body, rather than their teeth which chewed him whole? *Answer.*

But he himselfe saith, *This is my Body.* *Objection.*

So it is sacramentally, and by a *Trope:* but not literally and simply, as the words may be misconstrued. The like kinde of speech is used in other Sacraments: Circumcision is called *the covenant*, *Gen.* 17.13. the Lamb is called the *Passeover*, *Ex.* 12. 11. the rock Christ, 1 *Cor.* 10.14. And is not the cup said as well to be the *blood of the new Testament*: and yet our Saviour calleth the consecrated wine the *fruit of the vine*, Mat. 26.29. *Answer.*

But Christ saith, *Ioh.* 6.53.55. *Except ye eate the flesh of the Sonne of man, and drinke his blood, ye have no life in you, for my flesh is meate indeed, and my blood is drinke indeed.* *Objection.*

He speaketh not there of the Sacrament, but rather of the faithfull imbracing of him in this word; for the Lords Supper was never before, nor at that time instituted, & as yet the words of consecration had not beene spoken: and therefore if this be understood literally without the spirituall meaning thereof, it will follow, that either Transubstantiation was before the Lords Supper, or the Lords Supper before the night in which he was betraied. And in this place hee maketh no mention of bread to be turned into his body: and the words wrested, would rather argue his body to be transubstantiated into bread, or flesh, than bread to be changed into his body. *Answer.*

Vse 2. Secondly, as this serveth for the confutation of them that hold there is no bread at all in the Lords Supper: so it maketh against such as think there is nothing but bread to be expected there: that we are to receive onely the outward signe in a bare remembrance of Christ his death and passion: and so do they deprave the Mysteries of God, and extenuate his promises: as if when the Lord calleth all his people to this memorable banquet, hee should deceive them with empty dishes, and with painted meat in stead of better cheere. It would have bin a great disgrace for *Ahashuerosh* to have dealt so, when he called all his Princes to a banquet: and therefore they are justly to be reproved, that esteeme so basely of this holy feast, seeing God offereth, and exhibiteth truely, though not corporally, his owne Sonne, with all his pretious merits to every faithfull receiver: so that every guest at his Table may truly be said to feed of Christ Iesus.

Hester 1.

Vse 3. Thirdly, this is for our instruction, that seeing by this Sacrament we may be so nearely united unto Christ, wee should come with a large expectation of receiving good from the same: and therfore make preparation for the same accordingly, that so wee may not come unworthily, lest wee receive judgements instead of mercies.

Vse 4. Fourthly, here is another instruction, that when wee come to this celestiall feast, we fall to it, and feed of it as Christ biddeth us, *Take, and eat*: let us set our eyes, our eares, our taste, yea and our hearts also a-worke, with all serious meditation, to make use of those heavenly mysteries: and when wee see the bread broken, let us boldly conclude, Christ was broken for mee, and therefore I shall escape the breaking which I have deserved: and when the bread is given unto us, let us resolve, Christ with all his benefits is bestowed upon me; and when we eat the bread, let us assure our soules of this, Christ is made unto me the true bread, whereby my soule shall bee nourished unto life eternall. This is the eating that the Lord requireth and accepteth, and thus doing wee shall shew that there is mutuall love & kindnesse betwixt him & us, which is a thing well-pleasing unto him: & therfore he exhorteth all his

Cant. 5,1. servāts, saying, *Eate, O friends, drink & make you merry, O welbeloved,*

beloved. None but thoſe that are friends can eate of his dainties, and thoſe that are friends will eate of the ſame: and therfore if ever we would ſhew our ſelves to be Chriſt his friends, if we would enjoy the feeling of his love unto us, and be aſſured of our love towards him, let us refreſh our ſoules at this banquet, and not let our Saviour be at coſt in vaine, in making ſo good and ſo large proviſion for vs.

Verſe 23. *Alſo he tooke the Cup, &c.*

Doct. 3. Christ maketh us a full meale.

In that wine is joyned with the bread, this point may bee noted, that Ieſus Chriſt in the Sacrament doth make us a full meale.

We have here not onely bread, but wine, not onely the body of Chriſt, but his bloud alſo, even the whole Chriſt with all his graces offered unto us. This is promiſed in the Propheſie of *Iſaiah*, where it is ſaid, *In this mountaine ſhall the Lord of Hoaſts make unto all people a feaſt of fat things, even a feaſt of mixed wines, &c.* Meaning that he would make for his Church compleat proviſion, whatſoever might bee for health, or ſtrength, or delight. And the like is propoſed in the ninth Chapter of the *Proverbs*: and there is cauſe why wee ſhould thinke this to beſo, for

Reaſon. Firſt, he is of ſufficient abilitie, ſo that he can doe it. And Secondly, his love unto us his people is ſuch, that he is willing and ready to doe it. Some men when they make feaſts, could provide variety of good cheare, but they are loth to goe to the charges: others are frank and liberall enough, but they want ability to give great entertainment, ſo that they ſpeake that truly, which others do vaine-gloriouſly; I am ſorry that your cheere is no better. But it is otherwiſe with the Lord, for hee is bountifull and will not ſpare coſt, for he is rich in all abundance of heavenly treaſures, and needes not ſpare coſt, and therefore ſeeing Chriſt hath prayed that all his guests might have of the beſt, they ſhall not faile of any thing that their heart can deſire and long for.

Eſpecially ſeeing it is for his owne glory. A mortall and finite man, even the King of *Perſia*, for the ſetting forth of his magnificence and greatneſſe, ſpared no coſt in the feaſt that hee made

made unto his Princes: much leſſe will the Lord of glory in this banquet which he provideth for his people, ſeeing that he is incomparably better able: and more bountifull: and withall ſeeth and conſidereth the ſeverall needs and nececeſſities of all his children.

Vſe 1. Here then in the firſt place, is confuted the error of Popiſh Prieſts, that will have but one kinde of food at this table, and ſo cauſe the people to have a dry feaſt, without any wine at al: thus doe they ſacrilegiouſly rob Gods people of that allowance which he hath appointed for them, & him of that glory which is due in reſpect of his large bounty in this behalfe. For whereas the Lord inſtituted the cup as well as the bread, and prayed and gave thankes for the one as well as for the other, bidding them drinke all of the wine, as well as eate of the bread: they teach and practiſe the cleane contrary. And that their ſacriledge may not ſeeme ſo vile as in truth it is, they *Objection.* produce ſome ſhewes of reaſon for this their dealing. It is needleſſe (ſay they) to adde the wine unto the bread, for when we receive that, we feed on the whole Chriſt, and partaking of his body: wee muſt needs withall partake of his bloud, which is contained in the veines.

Anſw. See here how ſhameleſſely they controule Chriſt himſelfe: for if we receive the bloud in receiving his body, why did he ordaine the cup as well as the bread?

Objection. They anſwer, that Chriſt gave it onely to Miniſters, and ſo doe they.

Anſw. So did he the bread alſo, and therefore by the ſame reaſon, they may adminiſter neither bread nor wine unto the Laity: and what reaſon can they alledge why Miniſters may not receive the bloud in the veines, as well as any other: But the words of Chriſt may decide this controverſie when he ſaith, *Drink ye all of this, this is my bloud, &c. which is ſhed for you & for many, for the remiſſion of ſinnes.* And who are thoſe many? even all that ſhould afterwards beleeve in him. To thoſe for whom Chriſt his bloud was ſhed, the cup muſt bee adminiſtred: but his bloud was ſhed for private men as well as for Miniſters: and therefore the cup muſt be adminiſtred to them as well as unto the Apoſtles themſelves.

A ſecond

A ſecond uſe of this point is for inſtruction, that ſeeing there is ſuch plenty and variety of all good things offered us at this banquet, no other feaſting, or voluptuous living ſhould either keepe us from it, or make us come unworthily unto it: yet how many are there, that doe ſo glut themſelves with eating and drinking, and ſurfetting on their carnall delights, that they are altogether unfit for the Lords Table? *Vſe 2.*

Thirdly, here is matter of rejoycing for Gods poor ſervants, that though they fare hard at home, yet they may have as good refreſhing as any other in the Lords houſe: for Chriſt Ieſus doth there provide a full meale for them. This was *Davids* comfort when he was baniſhed from the aſſemblies of Saints, and could not be preſent at the Sacrament and ſacrifices; when he could but remember that hee had beene at them, and alſo beene a profitable communicant as oft as he could, it did much refreſh his ſoule, ſo that it was ſatisfied as *with marrow and fatneſſe*, with the very meditation therof; he had received ſuch ſtore of grace from Gods Ordinances, & ſuch a ſtrong apprehenſion of his favour, that he counted it better than life it ſelfe. And the conſideration thereof did not only comfort his ſoule, but helped him alſo in his bodily neceſſities, inſomuch that when hee was in a barren and dry Wilderneſſe, pinched with hunger, and preſſed with thirſt, the very remembrance of thoſe things that were paſt long before, did cauſe him more cheerfully to undergoe all his penury and want: If hee then tooke ſuch comfort therein, in his abſence, how much more ſhould we being preſent at the ſame? *Vſe 3.*

Verſe 24. *This is my blood of the new Teſtament, &c.*

That is, this is a ſigne and ſeale of the new Teſtament: which is ſo called, becauſe therby Ieſus Chriſt doth bequeath unto his people, as all the benefits of this life, ſo the ſpeciall bleſſing of all, even eternall life: and this is termed a new Teſtament, in reſpect of that which was made in the time of the law. That was, & this is: when that was inſufficient in ſome reſpects the Lord aboliſhed it, and eſtabliſhed this in ſtead therof, as being much better than that; for though both of them agree at laſt in one thing, that they are confirmed by the bloud of Chriſt, yet it is in a different manner: for That

Differences betwixt the old and new Covenant.

1 That was obscure, consisting in rites and ceremonies, whereby Christ was darkly prefigured: but this is more plaine and perspicuous, so that Gods mercy and goodnesse towards us in his Sonne, may more cleerely and evidently be discerned in this one Sacrament, then it could by all their sacrifices. Then the bloud of beasts was shed in stead of Christs, but now hath he shed his owne bloud for us.

2 Secondly, that Testament was appropriated to a few, and did belong properly to the nation of the *Iewes* alone: & if any other nations would have their part in it, they must unite themselves unto the *Iewes*: but this hath a larger extent, and pertaineth to all Gods Elect throughout the whole world.

3 Thirdly, that conveyed unto men a smaller measure of grace: this offereth great plenty and store thereof.

4 Fourthly, that was temporary, and to indure but a while, this is perpetuall, and shall last to the end of the world: and thus much for the differences betwixt the old Testament and the new. Now in that our Saviour saith, *This is my blood of the new Testament, &c.* The Doctrine is, that

*Doct.*4. Faithfull communicants enriched.

Faithfull Communicants at the Lords Table come not onely to be refreshed at a feast, but to be inriched by a legacy; Christs will & Testament being there confirmed unto them.

The particular legacies which Christ Iesus hath bequeathed unto them, are specified in the Epistle to the *Hebrewes*, *This is the Testament that I will make unto them, after those daies, saith the Lord, I will put my lawes into their hearts, & in their minds I will write them, & their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.* The substance of which covenant is this, that all their sins shall be forgiven, & both the guilt and punishment thereof wholly removed: yea they shal not only be justified, but also sanctified, the lawes of God & his promises shall be written in their minds, so that they shall have the knowledge of them: and in their hearts, so that they shall have the comfort, & feeling, and fruition of them: they shall not onely have interest in all Gods graces and blessings, but according to their neede shall have the use and injoyment thereof. And what treasures are comparable unto these? If wee should receive many ten thousand pounds at every Sermon and Sacrament, it were no-

Heb. 10. 16, 17.

thing

thing to this legacy, which is ſealed unto us in the Lords Supper: the worth whereof is ſo much the greater, by how much it hath more excellent appurtenances annexed unto it beyond that, which other Wils have.

1 First, when other legacies are paid, they can be no more demanded: but this is ſtill due unto us; it is as it were a continuall rent, and the more we receive, the greater aſſurance have we of a larger portion, both grace and glory.

2 Secondly, whereas when men have bequeathed any thing unto us, we muſt ſtay for it till their breath be out of their bodies: here it is otherwiſe; when once we have this Teſtament ſealed unto us, wee ſhall have preſent participation of the things therein made ſure unto us, becauſe the Teſtator is already deceaſed.

3 Thirdly, whereas others leave executors to perform their Wils, the Lord liveth for ever, ſo that he himſelfe that made it, will alſo execute it: and therefore as it is called a Teſtament, ſo it is elſe-where termed a Covenant: for the fulfilling whereof, the Lord hath entred into bonds, and pawned his word and promiſe, his truth and fidelity, his oath, yea himſelfe, his nature, and all that he hath: ſo that it is impoſſible he ſhould faile in performing the leaſt clauſe thereof. The uſe thereof ſhall be. Ier. 32 31.

Vſe 1. First, for inſtruction, that ſeeing there is ſuch a rich treaſure offered unto worthy receivers of the Lords Supper, therefore we ſhould not ſuffer any earthly commodities, as oxen, farmes, Luke 14. or the like to keep us from the ſame.

Vſe 2. Secondly, here is comfort for Gods poore ſervants: albeit they have but a ſmall quantitie of earthly things, ſeeing they have ſuch intereſt in Chriſt his Will, their ſtate is happy; they have a faire living, and a goodly heritage; the Lord himſelfe is their portion: and therfore though they have not theſe outward things themſelves, yet ſeeing they have the owner and commander of them to be theirs, they are richly provided for. Chriſt being theirs, all is theirs. And as in reſpect of themſelves, ſo alſo of their children, this offereth them matter of conſolation. Alas poore creatures (ſay many) we have little or nothing to leave them; but have you procured them a legacie

in

in Christ his will? if you doe so, though they have little, hee hath much, and therefore never be afraid; they shall be sufficiently provided for.

Vse 3. Thirdly, by this point all such as have beene communicants at the Lords Table, may make tryall of themselves, whether they have beene worthy receiuers or not: hath the Lord imparted his graces unto them? have they gotten assurance of the remission of their sinnes, and the power of the word in their hearts to quell the strength of their corruptions? &c. If they find this in themselves, they may be assured that the Lord hath graciously received them into his favour; but if they find no increase of knowledge nor desire thereof; no vertue of Christ to crucifie their lusts: and to quicken them to good duties, &c. they may as certainely conclude on the other side, that they came unworthily and unpreparedly, and therefore speed accordingly, being sent away altogether barren & empty. For concerning those that are within the covenant, it is said; *They shall teach no more every man his neighbour, & every man his brother,* (saying) *know the Lord* (they were past that) for (saith the Lord) *they shall all know me*) in a competent measure (*from the least of them unto the greatest.*

Ier. 31. 34.

The end of the tenth Sermon.

A

A profitable Metaphraſe, upon the *Epiſtle of* PAUL *to the Coloſſians.*

CHAP. I.

I *Paul* underſtanding that there are that go about to ſpoyle you, and to make a prey of you, partly by ſhew of wiſdome and Philoſophy, and partly by the beggerly elements of the world, or Ceremonies of the Iewes, thought it needfull to write unto you, that according as ye have received Ieſus Chriſt at the firſt, even ſo that ye would abide and proceed further in him, that you may be rooted and further built in the faith.

Verſe 1. Paul *an Apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt, by the will of God, and* Timotheus *our brother.*

AND that I write unto you, know that I do it with warrant: for I am an Apoſtle of Ieſus Chriſt, and not tyed to any particular congregation, or to one Province, yea, or to one Kingdome, but am an Ambaſſador, and have commiſſion to all the world. Neither do I come to this charge of mine owne will, or of the will of any other man, but by the will of God: and the ſame his revealed will. And albeit my authority herein be ſufficient to convince all men of the truth I write of, yet for further and ſtronger confirmation thereof, I have joyned *Timotheus*, my welbeloved brother, to beare record with me, that in the mouth of two witneſſes, the truth may be more ſurely eſtabliſhed.

Verſe 2. *To them which are at Coloſſe, Saints, and faithfull brethren in Chriſt, Grace be with you, and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

And conſidering that the bleſſing of all labour dependeth upon the Lord, our beginning is with hearty prayer unto God for the grace and favour of God, to be freely given, together

with all bleſſings, both of this life, and of that which is to come, from God the Father, and from our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, to you *Coloſſians*; yet not all that dwell in that City, but to thoſe which by faith are Saints and brethren, not in the fleſh, but in Ieſus Chriſt.

Verſe 3. *We give thanks unto God even the Father of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, alwayes praying for you.*

And that you may have further teſtimony of our love towards you, know you that we do continually both pray and give thanks to God for you: whom, to ſeparate from all falſe gods, I call the Father of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.

Verſe 4. *Since we heard of your faith in Chriſt Ieſus, and of your love towards all Saints.*

For, the report of your profeſſion and piety in Ieſus Chriſt, and of your love towards all Saints, is come unto us.

Verſe 5. *For the hopes ſake which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye have heard before by the word of truth, which is the Goſpell.*

Which both profeſſion and love we know to be ſincere in that they are upholden in you through the hope and expectation of a treaſure laid up, not on earth, but in heaven; which hope you have conceived, not of your owne fantaſie, or of the word of any man, but by the word of truth, that is to ſay, the Goſpell.

Verſe 6. *Which is come unto you, even as it is unto all the world, and is fruitfull, as it is alſo among you, from the day that ye heard, and truly knew the grace of God.*

And if you aske what is that truth or Goſpel? verily none other than that which is preached among you now: which is not among you alone, but is preached in all the world, a certaine note of the truth thereof: there having never beene, nor ever ſhal be any doctrine, which hath leavened ſo great a lump of dough as is the world, but onely the Goſpel. And for further aſſurance that it is the truth of God, I offer this to your conſideration, that as in the other places of the world, ſo among you, it hath brought forth fruit, even from the firſt time you have truly & ſincerely acknowledged this grace of God.

Verſe

Verſe 7. *As ye alſo learned of* Epaphras *our deare fellow-ſervant, which is for you a faithfull Miniſter of Chriſt.*

Where if you ſay, we know not what doctrine is preached in all the world, nor what fruit it hath brought forth; although it be no other thing than the common and conſtant report which many may bring unto you: yet to joyne neare unto you, and to rid you of all doubt, which is the true Goſpel of Chriſt, it is even the very ſame that you have learned of *Epaphras*; whom, if you love me, you muſt love, as being my beloved fellow-ſervant in Chriſt; yea, if you love your ſelves, you muſt reſpect him, as being a faithfull Miniſter of Chriſt for you.

Verſe 8. *Who hath alſo declared unto us your love, which ye have by the Spirit.*

Who made manifeſt unto us your true love, not onely naturall, but that eſpecially which is ſpirituall, whereof the Spirit is the author.

Verſe 9. *For this cauſe we alſo, ſince the day we heard of it, ceaſe not to pray for you, and to deſire that ye might be fulfilled with the knowledge of his will, in all wiſedome, and ſpirituall underſtanding.*

And as we give thanks for your good, and ſo for the ſame cauſe that you have well begun (both becauſe you ſhould not go backe againe, and for that you have not attained to perfection) even from the firſt day we heard of you, we never give over praying for you, making this ſuit, that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wiſedome and underſtanding, whereof the holy Ghoſt is the author.

Ver. 10. *That ye might walke worthy of the Lord, and pleaſe him in all things, being fruitfull in all good works, and increaſing in the knowledge of God.*

Not that you ſhould content your ſelves with a bare knowledge and contemplation of heavenly things, but that you walke worthy of thoſe whom the Lord hath called to ſuch honour, to a full and whole pleaſing of him, both by bringing forth fruit in every good worke, and by being increaſed in the knowledge of God.

Verſe 11. *Strengthened with all might, through his glorious power, unto all patience and long-ſuffering with joyfulneſſe.*

Wherin becauſe there are many difficulties and hindrances laid in our way, our ſuit alſo is, that you may be ſtrengthened with all manner of ſtrength, according to that glorious power, which being in God, he is able to furniſh you with; that even with joy, you may be able to beare all troubles, how grievous and how continuall ſoever they be.

Verſ. 12. *Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light.*

And as we give not over praying for you, ſo do we not ceaſe to give thanks to God the Father, becauſe that it is he that by his holy Spirit hath made us fit to have a part in the inheritance of Saints: whom whether we conſider as they are in this world by reaſon of the comfort and knowledge of God, or as they ſhall be in the world to come, by reaſon of their perfect bleſſedneſſe, may well be ſaid to be in light.

Verſe 13. *Who hath delivered us from the power of darknes, and hath tranſlated us into the kingdome of his deare Sonne.*

This part of our inheritance ſtandeth firſt, in that God with a mercifull hand pulled us out, both of the preſent darknes of ignorance and diſobedience, and from that which is to come even the moſt fearfull puniſhment of them both. And ſecondly, it ſtandeth in this, that the ſame God hath tranſlated us into the kingdome of his moſt deare Sonne, which being here begun, ſhall be accompliſhed in the life to come.

Verſe 14. *In whom we have redemption through his bloud; that is, the forgiveneſſe of ſinnes.*

In which his deare Sonne we have a full redemption, wherof one part which is our juſtification, we have already received, waiting for that which remaineth, even the redemption of our bodies: all which redemption is purchaſed unto us in the obedience of the Sonne, which obedience was ſpecially, and moſt ſignificantly declared in the ſhedding of his bloud.

Verſe 15. *Who is the image of the inviſible God, the firſtborne of every creature.*

This

This Chriſt, that you may know what plentifull and rich redemption you have in him, to the end that you may reſt in him alone, is thus ſet forth to you as followeth. As touching his perſon ſtanding of two natures, he is the moſt lively and expreſſe image and character of God, not onely of his qualities (if yet there were any qualities in the Godhead) but of his very nature and eſſence; in whom we behold God which is inviſible, and touch him which is infeelable, which is the principall heire of all the creatures in the world, in whom we that beleeve have right unto them.

Verſe 16. *For by him were all things created, which are in heaven, and which are in earth, things viſible and inviſible: whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or powers, all things were created by him, and for him.*

For by him all things are created in heaven and in earth, viſible & inviſible, even the Angels themſelves, to the worſhiping of whom ye are ſeduced: and amongſt them all of what degree or place ſoever they be: whether they ſit in Thrones, or whether they have Lordſhip, Principalitie or power over other Angels, all things are made by him and for him.

Ver. 17. *And he is before all things, & in him all things conſiſt.*

Wherefore he is before all things, and all things have their continuance, and are upholden by him.

Verſe 18. *And he is the head of the body of the Church: he is the beginning, and the firſt-borne of the dead, that in all things he might have the preeminence.*

And as touching the office which he executeth in reſpect of both natures, he is the head of the Church, which is his bodie, and he is the firſt fruits and firſt begotten of the dead, not onely in reſpect that himſelfe is riſen, but alſo that he is the author of reſurrection, which is here begun, and ſhall be perfected in the laſt day, when he ſhall change theſe vile bodies, and make them like his glorious body.

Verſe 19. *For it pleaſed the Father, that in him ſhould all fulneſſe dwell.*

For in him it is the good pleaſure of God, that the grace of the Spirit ſhould without meaſure fully dwell.

Verſe 20. *And by him to reconcile all things unto himſelfe, and to ſet at peace, through the blood of his Croſſe both the things in earth, and the things in heaven.*

That by him he might reconcile unto himſelf, making peace by the death of his Croſſe, betweene God and all men, whether it be they which having beleeved in him before his coming, are now in heaven: or thoſe which being in earth, do beleeve in him.

Verſe 21. *And you which were in times paſt ſtrangers and enemies, becauſe your minds were ſet in evill works, hath he now alſo reconciled.*

Wherefore having reconciled all unto himſelfe, he hath reconciled you alſo; which benefit that it might be the better eſteemed, conſider what ye were when he reconciled you, ſtrangers from God, yea enemies in your very underſtanding, which is the chiefeſt, and therefore much more in other parts: which enmitie was made manifeſt by your evill works.

Verſe 22. *In the body of his fleſh through death, to make you holy and unblameable, and without fault in his ſight.*

I ſay now he hath reconciled you in his humane nature, like unto ours, by his death, to the end he might make you holy, & without ſpot, and blameleſſe in all ſincerity, as before himſelfe.

Verſ. 23. *If ye continue grounded and eſtabliſhed in the faith, and be not moved away from the hope of the Goſpell, whereof ye have heard, and which hath beene preached to every creature which is under heaven, whereof I* Paul *am a Miniſter.*

And this reconciliation know no otherwiſe to belong unto you than ye abide grounded and ſetled in faith, and be not carried away from the hope you have heard in the Goſpell, the truth whereof appeareth, in that in ſo ſhort a time it hath been preached to all nations under the cope of heaven; of which Goſpell I my ſelfe am a Miniſter.

Verſe 24. *Now rejoyce I in my ſufferings for you, and fulfill the reſt of the afflictions of Chriſt in the fleſh for his bodies ſake, which is the Church.*

Where-

Wherein it ought not to diſmay you that I am in bonds, ſeeing my ſelfe do rejoyce in it: ſeeing it is not for redemption (which Chriſt alone hath wrought) but for the confirmation of your faith, and example of your patience: & ſeeing thereby are fulfilled the paſſions which are yet wanting unto the body of Chriſt, which is the Church, which muſt be like unto Chriſt her head in ſuffering, that it may be like unto him in glory. And finally, ſince it is not for your good alone, but for the good of the whole body of Chriſt, which is the Church.

Verſe 25. *Whereof I am a Miniſter, according to the diſpenſation of God which is given me unto you-ward to fulfill the word of God.*

Whereof as of the Goſpell I am a Miniſter, and that by the ordinance of God, who committed a ſtewardſhip unto me, that in you might be fulfilled the word of God.

Verſe 26. *Which is the myſtery hid ſince the world began, and from all ages, but now is made manifeſt to his Saints.*

I meane the ſecret of the Goſpel, ſo worthily called, for that it hath beene hidden from all times and generations hitherto: and now is made manifeſt not to all, but to his Saints.

Verſe 27. *To whom God would make knowne what is the riches of his glorious myſtery among the Gentiles, which riches is Chriſt in you, the hope of glory.*

Even to as many as God of his good will would make knowne the glorious riches of his ſecret among the Gentiles, which glorious riches is Chriſt in you, the ſame alone, by whom we may hope for glory.

Verſe 28. *Whom we preach, admoniſhing every man, and teaching every man in all wiſedome, that we may preſent every man perfect in Chriſt Jeſus.*

The ſame alſo whom we do preach, partly admoniſhing all ſorts of men, and partly teaching all ſorts of men, all heavenly wiſedome; thereby to preſent men of all ſorts, perfectly wiſe, and bleſſed, through Ieſus Chriſt.

Verſe 29. *Whereunto I alſo labour and ſtrive, according to his working which worketh in me mightily.*

Where-

Whereunto I labour ſore, ſtriving forcibly, which yet would be unfruitfull, were it not that God worketh by his Spirit mightily with my Miniſterie.

Chap. II.

Verſe 1. *For, I would ye knew what great fighting I have for your ſakes, and for them of* Laodicea, *and for as many as have not ſeene my perſon in the fleſh.*

That which I ſay of my grievous labour and ſtrife for all men, is truly verified of you: for I would not have you ignorant of the great agony and ſtrife for you, and for thoſe that are in the Church of *Laodicea*, and others that are about you in the Countries of *Phrygia*, notwithſtanding that they never ſaw my perſon.

Verſe 2. *That their hearts might be comforted, and they knit together in love, and in all riches of the full aſſurance of underſtanding, to know the myſtery of God, even the Father, and of Chriſt.*

And my care and thought is, that through the preaching of the Goſpel you might be comforted at the heart by a knitting, ſetling together, and compacting of your minds one to another, through abundance of perſwaded underſtanding, and acknowledgement of the myſtery of God, that is to ſay, of the Father, and of Chriſt.

Verſe 3. *In whom are hid all the treaſures of wiſedome and knowledge.*

In which Chriſt are all the treaſures of wiſedome and knowledge treaſured up, but yet hidden from the natural man.

Verſe 4. *And this I ſay, leſt any man ſhould beguile you with inticing words.*

The drift of all the commendations of the preaching of the Goſpel, and of Chriſt, whom the Goſpel doth ſet forth and preach unto you is that no man by apparant and perſwaſible ſpeeches do tranſport you.

Ver. 5. *For though I be abſent in the fleſh, yet am I with you in*

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the Spirit, rejoycing and beholding your order, and your ſtedfaſt faith in Chriſt.

Where if you aske, how I that never ſaw you, ſhould be thus carefull of you: and ſhould care for you ſo much, that never came to ſee you; know, that although I be abſent as touching the fleſh, yet I am preſent with as touching the Spirit, rejoycing to ſee your good order, and policy of the Church, cauſed through the ſoundneſſe of the faith which is towards Chriſt.

Verſe 6. *As ye have therefore received Chriſt Ieſus the Lord, ſo walke in him.*

Wherefore as you have receiued the Lord Ieſus Chriſt, ſo let it appeare by your converſation, as in all other things, ſo in holding faſt the truth of the Goſpell.

Verſe 7. *Rooted and built in him, and ſtabliſhed in the faith, as ye have beene taught, abounding therein with thanks-giving.*

Being rooted and builded in him, and ſtrengthened in the faith, and that with thankeſgiving for the mercy you have receiued in Chriſt.

Verſe 8. *Beware leſt there be any man that ſpoyle you through Philoſophie, and vaine deceit, through the traditions of men, according to the rudiments of the world, and not after Chriſt.*

Looke about you by ſound knowledge of the truth, leſt any of what opinion, holineſſe, or learning ſoever, by either ſhew of reaſon, comming from the braine of men, which hath beene received from hand to hand, and yet is nothing elſe but a deceit or ſleight, or elſe by the ceremonies of the Law, wherewith as by certaine rudiments or A. B. C. the people of God as children were trained to this perfection of Doctrine, which now hath ſhined out unto you, doe vanquiſh you, and draw you before them, as priſoners faſt bound in chaines and manacles of errours: yea, take heed of any doctrine whatſoever, that either taketh any thing away from Chriſt, or placeth any the leaſt jot of ſalvation other-where than in him.

Ver. 9. *For in him dwelleth all the fulneſſe of the Godhead bodily*

For ſeeing that in the nature of Chriſt, the fulneſſe of the

God-head doth perſonally reſt and abide, that both the natures of the God-head & the man-hood, make but one Chriſt, what is there needfull for your ſalvation, that you may not have abundantly in him?.

Verſe 10. *And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all Principality and Power.*

Conſidering that this fulneſſe of all graces which is in him, he hath not for himſelfe but for you, with all whatſoever you have neede of unto ſalvation.

And the ſame Chriſt howſoever a little inferiour to Angels as touching his man-hood, yet now according to his man-hood is head, not onely of the Church (as is aforeſaid) but of all Powers and Principalities that are in heaven, whereby may appeare their errour, which worſhip Angels.

Ver. 11. *In whom alſo ye are circumciſed with circumciſion made without hands, by putting off the ſinfull body of the fleſh, through the circumciſion of Chriſt.*

Having all fulneſſe and ſufficiencie in him, it followeth that what you would have, you ſeeke in him, which is the circumciſion of the fore-skinne, who was circumciſed not for himſelfe, but for you. And in him you have a more plentifull circumciſion than that which you ſo greedily purſue: for that is made with the bodily hands of man, which can goe no further than the fleſh: whereas this circumciſion is made with the finger of God, which entreth into the heart: whereof one fruit is, the cutting off of the whole body and maſſe of ſinne, which riſeth and buddeth from the carnall corruption of originall ſinne.

Verſe 12. *In that ye are buried with him through baptiſme, in whom ye are alſo raiſed up together, through the faith of the operation of God, who raiſed him from the dead.*

Where if you reply, that *Abraham* and other godly Patriarchs, and Fathers under the law, had this circumciſion of the heart, and yet notwithſtanding received the outward cutting of the fore-skinne for a ſeale of that inward circumciſion, I grant; and therefore you have for an outward ſeale of your

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inward cutting and purging your corruption, the Sacrament of Baptiſme: a ſeale, that with Chriſt you are buried unto ſin: that ſin is truely mortified and deadned in you, that it ſhould no more raigne over you, nor you ſhould live to it.

Another fruit alſo of this circumciſion, whereof Baptiſme is a ſeale, that with Chriſt you are raiſed up to newneſſe of life, through faith, which God hath wrought in you by the ſame almighty power, whereby he hath raiſed Chriſt frō the dead.

Verſe 13. *And ye which are dead in ſinnes, and in the uncircumciſion of your fleſh, hath he quickned together with him forgiving you all your treſpaſſes.*

And no marvaile though you have need of the ſame power to quicken you, which the Father declared in the raiſing up of his Sonne, ſeeing alſo you are dead in ſinnes, ſhadowed & ſet forth by the circumciſion of the fleſh, and at once quickened together with him, in having all your ſinnes forgiven you.

Verſe 14. *And putting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was againſt us, which was contrary to us, he even took it out of the way, and faſtened it upon the Croſſe.*

As by his death he hath gotten us remiſſion of ſinnes, ſo by the ſame he hath blotted out the hand-writing which was witneſſe of our ſinnes, as of a debt, wherein we ſtood bound to God: which hand-writing, ſtandeth in rites and ceremonies of the Law which by his death is not onely blotted out, but by the ſame nailes whereby his bleſſed hands and feet were nayled to the Croſſe, as it were nailed through and cancelled.

Verſe 15. *And hath ſpoiled the Principalities, and Powers, and hath made a ſhew of them openly, and hath triumphed over them in the ſame croſſe.*

Neither is it marvell if by his Croſſe theſe enemies were done away, ſeeing upon the ſame Croſſe he hath ſpoiled the Divell, and all the power and hoaſt of Hell: and having diſarmed them, he made an open ſhew of them, triumphing upon them in his Croſſe, where they thought utterly to have vanquiſhed and overcome him.

Verſe 16. *Let no man therfore condemne you in meat & drink,*

or in reſpect of an holy-day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath daies.

Wherefore as by this meanes circumciſion is taken away, ſo likewiſe is taken away difference of all meates and dayes. Therefore as in Chriſt, no man ſhould condemne you for the uſe of any meat and drink, or in reſpect of a feaſt-day, whether it be new Moone, or the three ſolemne Sabbaths; ſo if any man either ignorantly, or maliciouſly doe condemne you, you ſhal not need to feare their judgement.

Verſe 17. *Which are but a ſhadow of things to come: but the body is of Chriſt.*

Conſidering that theſe things were but ſhadowes, which have no more place, Chriſt the head being come.

Ver. 18. *Let no man at his pleaſure beare rule over you by humblenes of mind, and worſhipping of Angels, advancing himſelfe in thoſe things which he never ſaw, raſhly puft up with his fleſhly minde.*

Now having ſpoken of the Elements of the world, which are the ceremonies of the law, I come to the vaine Philoſophy I gave you warning of; againſt the which I obſerve this rule, that you give no man, of what ſhew ſoever, this power over you, that for his own luſt, in matters pertaining to God, hee uſurpe authority; howſoever the doctrine he bring carry a ſhew of humility: as for example, thoſe that teach the worſhipping of Angels, as meanes to come more eaſily to Chriſt. In which thing, what do they elſe but thruſt themſelves into things they never knew, only grounded upon a proud cõceit of their fleſhly mind, notwithſtanding their great pretence of humility?

V. 19. *And holdeth not the head, wherof all the body furniſhed & knit together by joynts & bonds increaſeth with the increaſing of God.*

Which error ought ſo much the more to be abhorred, as they which are infected with it, do not in deed, whatſoever they do in word, hold Chriſt faſt, which is the head of the Church: of whom the whole body, as it were by joynts and bonds, being furniſhed and campact together, is inriched & increaſed with an increaſe which God both alloweth and giveth.

Ver. 20. *Wherfore if ye be dead with Criſt, from the ordinances*

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of the world, why, as though ye lived in the world, are ye burdened with traditions?

Now ſeeing you are dead with Chriſt, by whoſe death you are delivered from the ceremonies of Gods own Law, wherewith as with certaine rudiments the people of the Iews were trained to further perfection, which now they have attained unto in the Doctrine of the Goſpell, why as though you lived ſtill in the world, do you ſuffer your ſelves to be charged with the ceremonies of the world?

Verſe 21. *As touch not, taſte not, handle not.*

I ſay that which you and your falſe Teachers ſay, Touch not ſuch a thing, taſte not ſuch a meat, handle not ſuch a one.

Verſe 22. *Which all periſh with the uſing, and are after the commandements and Doctrines of men.*

All which things ſeeing that through the uſe of them they are conſumed, have no ſtrength to life everlaſting, eſpecially being nothing but the doctrines and commandments of men.

Verſe 23. *Which things have indeed a ſhew of wiſedome in voluntary religion, and humbleneſſe of minde, and in not ſparing the body: neither have they it in any eſtimation to ſatisfie the fleſh.*

I deny not but that they have a colour and ſhew of wiſedome, partly, in that in them there is a worſhip over and above that which God hath commanded, to whom no ſervice is ſufficient which we can do: partly through a kinde of humility, and partly in a hard uſage of the body; which yet are of no price, ſeeing they are of things wherewith the fleſh is filled.

Chap. III.

Verſe 1. *If ye then be riſen with Chriſt, ſeeke thoſe things which are above, where Chriſt ſitteth at the right hand of God.*

BEing through faith ingrafted, and incorporated into Chriſt (as hath beene ſaid, and as your ſelves profeſſe) as touching ſinne, dead and buried with him: and as touching newneſſe of life, quickened and riſen againe: Now if in truth you

or in reſpect of an holy-day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath daies.

Wherefore as by this meanes circumciſion is taken away, ſo likewiſe is taken away difference of all meates and dayes. Therefore as in Chriſt, no man ſhould condemne you for the uſe of any meat and drink, or in reſpect of a feaſt-day, whether it be new Moone, or the three ſolemne Sabbaths; ſo if any man either ignorantly, or maliciouſly doe condemne you, you ſhal not need to feare their judgement.

Verſe 17. *Which are but a ſhadow of things to come: but the body is of Chriſt.*

Conſidering that theſe things were but ſhadowes, which have no more place, Chriſt the head being come.

Ver. 18. *Let no man at his pleaſure beare rule over you by humblenes of mind, and worſhipping of Angels, aduancing himſelfe in thoſe things which he never ſaw, raſhly puft up with his fleſhly minde.*

Now having ſpoken of the Elements of the world, which are the ceremonies of the law, I come to the vaine Philoſophy I gave you warning of; againſt the which I obſerve this rule, that you give no man, of what ſhew ſoever, this power over you, that for his own luſt, in matters pertaining to God, hee uſurpe authority; howſoever the doctrine he bring carry a ſhew of humility: as for example, thoſe that teach the worſhipping of Angels, as meanes to come more eaſily to Chriſt. In which thing, what do they elſe but thruſt themſelves into things they never knew, only grounded upon a proud cõceit of their fleſhly mind, notwithſtanding their great pretence of humility?

V. 19. *And holdeth not the head, wherof all the body furniſhed & knit together by joynts & bonds increaſeth with the increaſing of God.*

Which error ought ſo much the more to be abhorred, as they which are infected with it, do not in deed, whatſoever they do in word, hold Chriſt faſt, which is the head of the Church: of whom the whole body, as it were by joynts and bonds, being furniſhed and campact together, is inriched & increaſed with an increaſe which God both alloweth and giveth.

Ver. 20. *Wherfore if ye be dead with Criſt, from the ordinances*

of

of the world, why, as though ye lived in the world, are ye burdened with traditions?

Now seeing you are dead with Christ, by whose death you are delivered from the ceremonies of Gods own Law, wherewith as with certaine rudiments the people of the Iews were trained to further perfection, which now they have attained unto in the Doctrine of the Gospell, why as though you lived still in the world, do you suffer your selves to be charged with the ceremonies of the world?

Verse 21. *As touch not, taste not, handle not.*

I say that which you and your false Teachers say, Touch not such a thing, taste not such a meat, handle not such a one.

Verse 22. *Which all perish with the using, and are after the commandements and Doctrines of men.*

All which things seeing that through the use of them they are consumed, have no strength to life everlasting, especially being nothing but the doctrines and commandments of men.

Verse 23. *Which things have indeed a shew of wisedome in voluntary religion, and humblenesse of minde, and in not sparing the body: neither have they it in any estimation to satisfie the flesh.*

I deny not but that they have a colour and shew of wisedome, partly, in that in them there is a worship over and above that which God hath commanded, to whom no service is sufficient which we can do: partly through a kinde of humility, and partly in a hard usage of the body; which yet are of no price, seeing they are of things wherewith the flesh is filled.

Chap. III.

Verse 1. *If ye then be risen with Christ, seeke those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.*

BEing through faith ingrafted, and incorporated into Christ (as hath beene said, and as your selves professe) as touching sinne, dead and buried with him: and as touching newnesse of life, quickened and risen againe: Now if in truth you

you be riſen with Chriſt, then as Chriſt riſing remained not here on earth, but aſcended up into heaven, where under God, as touching his man-hood, he is exalted in power and majeſty above all powers and principalities in heaven and earth; ſo you by ſeeing, and ſeeking after the graces that come from above, aſcend up whither he is gone.

Verſe 2. *Set your affections on things that are above, and not on things which are on the earth.*

And to the intent you may carefully ſeeke after them, ye muſt firſt favour and ſet your affections upon the things that are above, and conſequently not to ſet your affections upon either the former corruptions of falſe doctrine, or elſe upon the defilements of a corrupt converſation of life: or finally, upon the periſhable tranſitory things of this baſe world, all which are meere earthly.

Verſe 3. *For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Chriſt in God.*

Vnto which diſtaſte of earthly things you are called, in that you being riſen with Chriſt, are conſequently dead with him. Where if haply you ſhould object, that there is ſmall wiſdome to quit your former life, not being aſſured of another, & ſhould aske how it ſhould appeare you live, ſeeing beſides the afflictions you are expoſed unto, you feele the daily incumbrance of ſinne, which dwelleth in your mortall bodies: It is true that it is not ſo apparant, as that which is hidden from the world, and of your ſelves not ſo fully and feelingly underſtood. Howbeit that ought not to diſmay you: firſt, for that it is laid up with God, who is a true keeper of it. And ſecondly, for that as your life is hidden, ſo is Chriſts life and glory, who is the head.

Verſe 4. *When Chriſt which is our life, ſhall appeare, then ſhall ye alſo appeare with him in glory.*

Iſa. 60, 17, 19. & 65. 19. Matth. 17.

And laſtly, for that when Chriſt, of whom you have life, ſhall be made manifeſt in glory, then ſhall you alſo with him appeare glorious.

Verſe 5. *Mortifie therefore your members, which are on the earth, fornication, uncleanneſſe, the inordinate affection, evill concupiſcence, and covetouſneſſe, which is Idolatry.*

Wherefore being aſſured of another life, mortifie your members that are earthly and carnall. If you aske what? I cannot reckon up all, but I will touch ſome, thoſe ſpecially that you are infected with, whereby you may eaſily conceive of the reſt, ſuch as are fornication, uncleane behaviour, wantonneſſe, evill concupiſcence, and covetouſneſſe, which beſides the exceſſive deſire of goods, is a kinde of idolatry, for that men do put their truſt in riches, that are covetous.

Verſe 6. *For the which things ſake, the wrath of God cometh on the children of diſobedience.*

For every one of the which, the wrath of God cometh on thoſe that remaine in them.

Verſ. 7. *Wherein ye alſo walked once, when ye lived in them.*

And the rather mortifie theſe ſinnes as in times paſt you have practiſed them, when being given unto them, your naturall corruption as a kinde of life, gave power and moving for the practiſe of them.

Verſe 8. *But now put ye away even all theſe things: wrath, anger, malicious neſſe, curſed ſpeaking, filthy ſpeaking out of your mouth.*

Now therefore that you are called to the hope of a better life, lay aſide farre from you, as things you cannot abide the ſight of, not onely the groſſer ſinnes before mentioned, but alſo all manner of ſinne, without endeavour, whereof there is no true mortification. For example, anger, heat, from whence commeth malice, which breaketh out at the mouth, by railing and reviling.

Verſe 9. *Lye not one to another, ſeeing that ye have put off the old man with his works.*

Specially when you cannot truly charge them, take heed you lye not one againſt another: but putting off, as an old and rotten garment, the old man, which you bring from your mothers wombe, with the actions thereof, as it were ſo many tatters.

Verſe 10. *And have put on the new, which is renued in knowledge, after the image of him that created him.*

Now leſt being found naked you be aſhamed, put on, as a new and comely garment, the new man: which if you aske what it is, it is the ſame part which is renewed in you, to the likeneſſe of him that made you, which likeneſſe conſiſteth in the knowledge of God.

Verſe 11. *Where is neither Grecian nor Jew, circumciſion nor uncircumciſion, Barbarian, Scythian, bond, free, but Chriſt is all, and in all things.*

Whereby ſhall come to paſſe, that howſoever the falſe teachers place it in being a Iew, rather than being a Gentile: circumciſed rather than uncircumciſed: and the opinion of the common ſort is, that the Barbarian and Scythian is in a farre worſe caſe than the Romane, and the ſervant but a beaſt in reſpect of the free-man: yet with God there is no difference, ſeeing Chriſt, whom by a new birth they have put on, is in all, and is all that God reſpecteth, and accepteth of.

Verſe 12. *Now therefore as the Elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercy, kindneſſe, humbleneſſe of mind, meekneſſe, long-ſuffering.*

To come to a more particular deſcription of the new man, decke your ſelves (as it becommeth the Elect of God, and ſuch as are holy through his love, the cauſe both of your election and holineſſe) with tender compaſſion, eaſineſſe to be imployed, humilitie, mildneſſe, long-ſuffering,

Verſe 13. *Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrell to another; even as Chriſt forgave you, even ſo do ye.*

Which vertues muſt be declared effectually, not onely in forbearing one another, but alſo in frankly forgiving one another, if any have a quarrell one againſt another, even as Chriſt hath frankly forgiven you; even ſo do ye.

Verſe 14. *And above all theſe things put on love, which is the bond of perfectneſſe.*

And though thoſe be ſingular vertues, yet above them all, as the root and mother of them, decke your ſelves with love, which is as it were a bond to binde in a bundle thoſe, and all other vertues tending to perfection, and without which there

is

is no soundnesse in any of them, what glittering shew soever they carry.

Verse 15. *And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which ye are called in one body, and be ye amiable.*

And though the spirit of the old man within you, hath a desire to contend, yet let the peace of God beare the sway, and overcome: unto the which peace you are evidently called, in that you are members of one mysticall body: for the better entertainment of which peace, be gratefull one to another, as well in conferring, as in requiting benefits.

Verse 16. *Let the word of Christ dwell in you plenteously in all wisedome, teaching and admonishing your owne selves in Psalmes, and Hymnes, and spirituall Songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*

To the end you may refraine all the vices aforesaid, and practise all the vertues afore-spoken, together with all other vices to be avoided, and vertues to be embraced, it is necessarie that you be exhorted; that the Word of God be as familiar unto you, as if now in one house it dwelt with you, that you have it also plentifully, and as it were treasured up against the day of need. Last of all, that you have it in all wisedome, making choice both of the things that are most important in it, and especially that which doth most concerne your selves, & your owne particular use, avoiding all curious questions, tending rather to strife, than to edification of God; which is by faith. And as you must have it for your owne use, so also for the use of others, as well in teaching those that are ignorant, as in admonishing those that walke not according to their knowledge they have received.

And in your meetings to make merry, let your mirth be shewed forth in Psalmes, singing as well with instrument as with voyce: also with Hymnes of thanksgiving for benefits received: and for further variety against irksomnesse which our nature easily falleth into, with songs of praising God for his noble acts, all spirituall unto the Lord, not onely with the voyce, but especially with the heart, with such both tune and gesture as may give grace to the hearer.

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Ver. 17. *And whatſoever ye ſhall do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jeſus, giving thanks to God even the Father by him.*

To conclude (becauſe it is infinite to ſpeake of all things particularly) whatſoever you do in word or deed, let it be ſuch, as calling on the Name of God in Ieſus Chriſt, for the good direction in them, you may returne with thankfulneſſe to God the Father through Ieſus Chriſt, the onely Mediatour betweene God and us.

Verſe 18. *Wives ſubmit your ſelves unto your husbands, as it is comely in the Lord.*

Having inſtructed you in the duties which are generall to all, I come to informe you in thoſe that are ſpeciall, according to the ſeverall callings of every one of you, as thoſe which will eaſily come from you, if you have well profited in the former. Now according to the order God himſelfe keepeth in the fift Commandement, I will begin with the duties of inferiours.

You wives therefore, notwithſtanding you have other duties, I exhort you to that which is hardeſt for you, wherein you are cuſtomably ſhorteſt, and being performed, others will eaſily follow; that you be ſubject and obedient, as to others that may be above you (as Parents and Magiſtrates) ſo eſpecially unto your owne husbands, as that which is the moſt comely thing of all, becauſe you I know ſtrive to comelineſſe. Which obedience and ſubjection, is not yet ſo abſolute, and ſo generall, but it hath this exception, ſo farre as you are commanded things not unlawfull by the Word of God.

Verſe 19. *Husbands love your wives, and be not bitter unto them.*

You husbands although you owe ſundry duties unto your wives, yet ſpecially I exhort you to love them dearely, as that which you are moſt cuſtomably ſhorteſt in: and which being throughly ſetled in you, will eaſily pull all other duties after it. And therefore be not bitter towards them, which cannot ſtand with love.

Verſe 20. *Children, obey your parents in all things, for that is well pleaſing unto the Lord.*

You children, from a heart ſubdued, and truly humble, obey your

your parents, not by halves, and ſo farre as they command things to your liking, but in all things not contrary to the Word of God, although it be to the croſſing of your deſires: for which cauſe let it be alwayes before your eyes as a goade to ſtirre you up to this obedience, that in ſo doing you ſhall not onely pleaſe your Parents, but do a thing acceptable to the Lord himſelfe.

Verſe 21. *Fathers provoke not your children to anger, leſt they be diſcouraged.*

You Parents abuſe not the authority or the plyable mindes of your children, either by commanding things unlawfull, or by hard uſage of them to provoke them to any undutifulneſſe towards you, or to have no courage or comfort to do the things required of them.

Ver. 22. *Servants be obedient unto them that are your Maſters, according to the fleſh, in all things, not with eye-ſervice, as men-pleaſers, but in ſingleneſſe of heart, fearing God.*

You ſervants, from a minde ſubdued, obey your Maſters, whoſe commandement over you, is but for a time, whiles you are in this fraile eſtate, and that in all things which may ſtand with the keeping of a good conſcience. Now your ſervice muſt not be alone when your Maſters ſtand by and looke on, as ſeeking onely to pleaſe your Maſters: but in ſingleneſſe of heart as fearing God, whoſe eye is alwayes upon you, when your maſters eye is off.

Ver. 23. *And whatſoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.*

Your ſervice ought alſo to be voluntary and cheerefull, as that which is due to the Lord, who loveth a cheerfull giver, and not as unto man that cannot diſcerne whether it be done frankly.

Verſe 24. *Knowing that of the Lord ye ſhall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye ſerve the Lord Chriſt.*

Knowing that you ſhall receive in reward from the Lord, life, as an inheritance which he will freely, as upon his children, beſtow upon you: for it ought to uphold you in your dutifull ſervice, that you ſerve not ſo much your Maſters which

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are but men, and therefore ſometimes unthankfull and unable to recompence; but the Lord, who is both able, and will recompence your well-doing.

Verſe 25. *But he that doth wrong, he ſhall receive for the wrong that he hath done, and there is no reſpect of perſons.*

Remembring on the other ſide that whoſoever he be that doth wrong, whether maſter or ſervant, thereof he ſhall receive the puniſhment from the Lord: who accepteth neither the perſon of the ſervant to pity him, becauſe of his poore and baſe eſtate, nor of the maſter to ſpare him, becauſe of his dignity and high degree.

Chap. IIII.

Verſe 1. *Ye maſters, do unto your ſervants that which is juſt and equall, knowing that ye alſo have a maſter in heaven.*

YOu Maſters, looke that you yeeld unto your ſervants both wages, and meat and drinke, as that which is right, and with moderate reſt and recreation ſome further recompence, according to the good ſervice they have done: as that which is equall: conſidering that as your ſervants are to render an account unto you, ſo you muſt give an account unto your Maſter which is in heaven.

Verſe 2. *Continue in prayer, and watch in the ſame with thanks-giving.*

And now to returne againe to the generall duties, and yet ſuch as for the moſt part belong rather unto you, than unto other perſons and Churches not ſo ſtated or affected as yours, I exhort you to take paines, and to continue in petitions, and requeſts unto God, with heed taken that it be not done carelelly and drouſily; the which both with continuance, painfulneſſe, and watching, muſt be done and performed in thankſgiving for graces already received.

Ver. 3. *Praying alſo for us, that God may open unto us the dore of utterance*

utterance, to speake the mystery of Christ, wherefore I am also in bonds.

Praying in both sorts as for all men, & the faithfull above others, so especially for me and *Timothy*, that God would open our mouthes wide; as a gate (otherwise shut) is set open, that we may speake the secrets of Christ, naturally hidden from all men, and by dispensation of God, alwaies to the comming of Christ, obscurely knowne to the faithfull, yea, to the Angels themselves: for which I am in hold.

Verse 4. *That I may utter it, as it becommeth me to speake.*

In which respect you are yet further to strengthen and stretch out your prayers for me, that all feare set apart, I may make it manifest as it is meet, both in regard of the excellency thereof, and the speciall trust of the Apostleship which is committed unto me.

Verse 5. *Walke wisely towards them that are without, and redeeme the time.*

And seeing you dwell amongst those that are strangers from God, walke wisely, that you be neither infected with their evils, nor they have occasion to speake evill of the truth; & that by the light of your godly conversation they may be allured to give eare to the truth: therein following the example of diligent Merchants, that to redeeme their losses that are past, watch to take all opportunity of gaining.

Verse 6. *Let your speech be gracious alwaies, and powdred with salt, that we may know how to answer every man.*

More particularly, looke to your speeches, in the wise ordering whereof Christian wisedome is singularly discerned, that it be alwaies (as savorie meate) well seasoned, whiles you shall be able to answer every man according as their particular estates require.

Ver. 7. Tychicus *our beloved brother & faithful Minister, and fellow servant in the Lord shall declare unto you my whole state.*

In the love & care I beare unto you, I have sent *Tychicus* unto you, who shal inform you of all my estate, wherof I know you wil be glad to hear; whom that you may receive as it becommeth, I cōmend unto you for a brother, worthy to be beloved;

also

alſo for a faithfull Miniſter, & my fellow in the Lords ſervice.

Verſe 8. *Whom I have ſent unto you for the ſame purpoſe, that he might know your ſtate, and might comfort your hearts.*

Whom I have ſent, as to let you underſtand of mine affaires, ſo to know what caſe you are in, thereof to make report unto me, and eſpecially that hee may comfort you at the heart, againſt the ſtorme of perſecution raiſed againſt you.

Verſe 9. *With Oneſimus a faithfull and beloved brother, who is one of you, They ſhall ſhew you of all things here.*

And with him, that the embaſſage may have more authority, and that in the mouth of two witneſſes the things concerning you or me may be better aſſured, I ſent *Oneſimus* a brother both faithfull and worthy to be beloved, howſoever hee hath ſlipped in time paſt; who is alſo one of the members of the ſame Church: theſe two ſhall give you to underſtand of all things that may concerne you that are done in theſe parts.

Ver. 10. *Ariſtarchus my fellow-priſoner ſaluteth you, and Marcus Barnabas ſiſters ſonne, (touching whom yee received commandement, If he come unto you, receive him.)*

Ariſtarchus in love ſaluteth you.

Verſe 11. *And Jeſus which is called Juſtus, which are of the circumciſion. Theſe onely are my worke-fellowes unto the Kingdome of God, which have beene unto my conſolation.*

So doth *Marke* and *Jeſus*: whom that you may be provoked to love againe, I would have you to underſtand, that touching *Ariſtarchus*, he is my fellow-priſoner for the Goſpell; touching *Marke*, he is ſiſters ſonne to *Barnabas* that notable ſervant of God, of whom you have had commandement, that if hee come unto you, you ſhould receive him accordingly.

And touching *Jeſus*, his converſation hath beene ſuch as thereby he hath gotten the ſurname of Iuſt. And of them all three together, there are great cauſes why you ſhould reſpect them, for that they are of the race of the Iewes, with whom God hath made ſpeciall covenant: eſpecially ſeeing that of ſo

great

great a number of *Jewes* that are here, only these three help to advance the kingdom of heaven by giving assistance unto me.

Verse 12. *Epaphras the servant of Christ, which is one of you, saluteth you, and alwaies striveth for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect, and full in all the will of God.*

Epaphras saluteth you, between whom and you there is a speciall bond, by reason whereof even now absent from you, yet he is one of you; and being as you know a worthy servant of Christ in the Ministery of the Gospell, whereby his prayers are more effectuall, he prayeth continually with great strife and earnestnesse for you; that having entred into the holy profession of the Gospell, you may stand and abide in it, with daily increase both in the knowledge and obedience of the whole will of God, untill such time as by death you shall be compleat and perfect men in Christ.

Verse 13. *For I beare him record, that he hath a great zeale for you, and for them of Laodicea, and them of Hierapolis.*

For, howsoever, I am not privy to his private prayers, yet I dare be bold so to write, because I my selfe am witnesse how (notwithstanding his absence) he burneth in much love towards you, and towards the brethren in *Laodicea* and *Hierapolis*; the rather for your sakes which may either be furthered by their good, or hindered by their ill estate.

Ver. 14. *Luke the beloved Physitian greeteth you, & Demas.*

Luke the Physitian, one worthy to be beloved, saluteth you, and so doth *Demas*.

Verse 15. *Salute the brethren which are of Laodicea, Nimphas, and the Church which is in his house.*

Salute the brethren in *Laodicea* from me, especially *Nimphas* and his family; which for their piety and good order in it, I may not unfitly terme a little Church.

Verse 16. *And when this Epistle is read of you, cause that it be read in the Church of the Laodiceans also, and that likewise ye read the Epistle written from Laodicea.*

And

And when you have read the Epiſtle in the Church, to teſtifie your communion, as in all other good things, ſo eſpecially in this ſacred treaſure of the word of Chriſt, procure it to be read in the Church of Laodicea; as on the other ſide, that you alſo read the Epiſtle which was written from Laodicea.

Verſe 17. *And ſay to* Archippus, *Take heed to the miniſtery that thou haſt received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it.*

Tell alſo *Archippus* your Paſtor and ordinary Miniſter, from me, that he looke more diligently to his charge of miniſtery, which he hath received of the Lord: that hee doe it not by halves, but that he performe it in every reſpect, both of cheerfull teaching and of good example of life unto the flocke.

Verſe 18. *The ſalutation by the hand of me* Paul. *Remember my bonds, Grace be with you.*

Finally, I have ſent you alſo my ſalutations, not by the hand of my Scribe, (as the other ſalutations,) but by mine owne hand: wherunto (for a cloſe of my letters) I adde my requeſt unto you, that you would in your prayers remember my bonds, for the obtaining of whatſoever my captive eſtate doth require.

And further, my humble prayer is for the grace of God, to be with you: and ſo I am aſſured that it will be.

FINIS.